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THE ANSWER TO MUSSOLINI

Mussolini's attack on Greece follows the familiar lines of Axis strategy. The Duce had given General Metaxas two recent pledges not to attack Greece; that should have been sufficient warning that the invasion was planned. Greece is not, perhaps, an ideal victim, for the Greeks are defending themselves. Mussolini doubtless reckons that the armies of a Power with a population of over 40 millions ought, given greatly superior armament, to be able to deal with those of a nation of seven millions. The pretexts advanced for the ultimatum hurled at the Greeks with only four hours for deliberation hardly deserve consideration. Even if some trivial frontier incident did occur near Koritza—and this is doubtful—that would not justify war. For the other charge, that the Greeks had passed the limits of neutrality in their friendliness to this country, no proof was advanced. Greek conduct, so far as our information goes, had been correct. It is significant that they had in custody as internees as many as twenty British airmen, who had accidentally violated their territory. They were, of course, freed when General Metaxas, unhesitatingly accepted Mussolini's challenge.

This attack is a blow to us as well as to the Greeks. We shall, indeed, acquire the use of many good anchorages and some airports in the Greek islands, notably the deep inlet of Suda Bay in Crete: we shall also have the fuller use of the big Greek merchant marine. But it is a grave mistake to dwell complacently on these incidental gains. That was the mood that misled us in the early stages of the Norwegian catastrophe. Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax gave Britain's guarantee to Greece. How far can we implement it? We can do more for her by air and sea than we could do for Poland or (had she claimed it) for Rumania. But we can do little for her on land, and there, if Italy's strength should not suffice, German and, possibly, Bulgarian aid can be called in. To give a guarantee which cannot be fulfilled is always fatal to prestige. It is clear that no help will be quickly forthcoming from the Turks, who plead the clause in their treaty with us which exempted them from any action that might prejudice their relations with Russia. It is said in Ankara that they will march, if the Bulgarians attack Greece. But would the Russians like that any better? As yet the Bulgarians show no sign of moving, though they have always coveted the Greek port of Dedeagatch with a corridor as an outlet to the Aegean. But King Boris is resolved not to repeat his father's mistakes, and the two strongest parties in this peasant community, which retains some relics of democracy, are the Agrarians and the Communists, whose attitude is pro-Russian and anti-German. It is to be hoped that the Turks, by clinging to neutrality, will not one day find that it is too late to resist German encroachment.

Apart from any satisfaction that Mussolini's vanity might derive from the incorporation of a Greek province in his Roman Empire, these operations are doubtless intended to pave the way for a future drive towards the oil of Iraq and Syria. The Turks, it is thought, will either be intimidated into granting a passage to the forces of the Axis across the Straits, or else they will be encircled in Thrace and the more easily overcome. It is possible and even probable that the function assigned to the Italian generals is not really to conquer Egypt, but to hold our forces immobile in its deserts, while the Axis prepares to march, or fly, downwards from the North. This is an extremely rash and adventurous strategy. With skill and daring we ought to be able to circumvent it. But if M. Laval is about to hand over to the Germans what is left of the French fleet with all the French naval and air ports, we have not a moment to lose. The strategical key lies in Syria. In an able letter an anonymous correspondent argues that the right strategical step is to occupy this French mandated territory. The thing could probably be done, if we offered the Syrians their independence on the lines laid down by Léon Blum during his tenure of power. The chances are that this bold move, if it succeeded, would encourage the Turks and swing them over into active belligerency. No one doubts either their friendliness or their courage, but they are depressed by our apparent lack of initiative. Little has been done to win over the Moslem world. A bold stroke of this kind, if fortune favoured it, might impress the Russians also. They, too, are hypnotised by the spectacle of German enterprise, which we have countered so far only by passive defence. We need hardly add the proviso that if we should embark on this enterprise, we must not risk another Dakar fiasco. French forces, if they obey

Vichy, are now our enemies, for they are actively "collaborating" with the Axis.

We hope that this suggestion will be promptly and favourably considered. As a military proposition it seems to us more advantageous by far than any attempt to help the Greeks directly by landing what could be only a small force at Salonica, for if all went well, it would secure the Straits and deny the oil of Iraq to the Germans, which is for them the eventual and perhaps the indispensable key to victory. If, on the other hand, we rely on passive defence, we may find ourselves in the spring between two attacking armies in Egypt. But there is not a day to lose. The threat from M. Laval's treachery is a graver menace than anything Mussolini can do in Macedonia. It can be countered, if anywhere, by an advance into Syria.

Hitler and France

Alexander Werth writes :

Hitler's treatment of France goes strictly according to plan—the plan outlined in *Mein Kampf* long ago.

> A shrewd conqueror will always enforce his demands on the conquered only by stages, as far as that is possible. Then he may expect that a people who have lost all strength of character will not find in any of these acts of oppression, if one is enforced apart from the other, sufficient reason for taking up arms again.

After the first Laval-Hitler meeting last week, there was a lot of talk in what is called "responsible quarters in London" to the effect that there was a sharp conflict of opinion between Laval and Pétain; it was said that the old man had been thoroughly disgusted with the results of his policy of surrender. The optimists even visualised a spectacular resignation by Marshal Pétain, which would crystallise all the feeling of revolt against Germany existing in the country. The King's message to Pétain last Friday was probably sent on the strength of such optimistic speculations. Marshal Pétain's pathetic broadcast dispels such hopeful speculations. Laval, in close co-operation with Hitler, who has had sufficient experience in the past in dealing with octogenarian field-marshals, got Pétain to agree to everything—"in principle." Hitler received Pétain—in the phrase of the Vichy communiqué, "with all the honours due to his rank," meaning, no doubt, a rather spectacular German guard of honour; and the meeting between Hitler and Pétain was, in the words of the same communiqué, marked by great courtesy. Pétain—as his experiences as Ambassador at the court of General Franco show—is extremely susceptible to flattery; and as a result of the meeting, he fully agreed to the principle of co-operation with Germany—the details of the agreement to be worked out subsequently by the Germans and M. Laval. The trusted Laval thereupon became Foreign Minister, in place of M. Baudouin. Long an enemy of Britain, Laval decided soon after the Armistice, that Germany was the horse to back. Hitler has made him his *homme de confiance*. It is he who has gone back to Paris now to work out the details of the "agreement in principle." "In principle" is a pretty phrase which means that the French are going to give up all kinds of things in reality, and that the Germans will carry out their part of the bargain "in principle"—to the extent, and no more, that it happens to suit them. This will be true of the French war prisoners, a few of whom they may release from time to time. "In principle" the Vichy Government may be allowed to return to Paris, when it is convenient for the Germans, and no sooner. Meantime the Germans will no doubt discreetly take possession of various points in North Africa, and, in one way or another, of the French navy. The mystery and discretion surrounding the execution of the "agreement in principle" is probably calculated (a) not to alarm French public opinion unduly, and (b) to catch us napping again. While certain people in London will go on splitting hairs over the real meaning of the word "in principle," the Germans may well implant themselves at Casablanca, Bizerta, Beyrouth and Dakar, in the expectation that, one fine day, we and General de Gaulle may look even sillier than last time.

Shelter and Debris

A month's hard labour has not been enough for Mr. Morrison and Miss Wilkinson to do more than make a dent in the East End problem. A letter from experienced workers in a hard-hit area which we publish this week shows that many shelters are still dangerously damp, cold and insanitary. Heating is an urgent need. In some cases where the necessary changes are superficial—the construction of decent lavatory accommodation, for instance—the delay seems quite unnecessary. Soldiers, as our correspondents suggest, could build the required latrines in a very few days. Orders are given, plans are worked out and something is accomplished. But the pace is far too gentle. Bunks are coming along and so are hostels. Canteens and medical services in the shelters lag. Efforts are being made to open city basements at night, but all sorts of difficulties make progress slow. No one doubts either the energy or the ability of Mr. Morrison or Miss Wilkinson. The doubt is only whether the present Minister is sufficiently ruthless in dealing with overlapping authorities and administration hesitations. In his present position he cannot do wrong by being bold. He can fail disastrously by being cautious.

We hope Mr. Morrison can before long make an announcement about his success in opening and preparing more deep shelter accommodation. Success depends in part on the speed of evacuation: there are still a hundred thousand children or more who ought not to be in London. More Tubes are being opened; we believe that further "headings" for the undergrounds can be scooped out in much less time than is commonly imagined. The problems involved in introducing the ticket system for bunks are obvious, and we think they are being sensibly tackled. In some areas where large communal shelters are not the rule, the surface shelters with bunks may have to serve for a time. But they are not a solution. Where communal shelters are deep they provide greater safety and, in the long run only a little less important, they provide far better chances of making the winter tolerable to thousands of people. People will need comfort, entertainment and fun this winter as well as security.

No explanation has yet been given about why the troops are not used in far larger numbers in the work of rescue and demolition. Large areas of debris have a depressing effect—even for those who do not fear that people they know may be buried beneath it. London's rescue workers—and the problem is now a Midland problem as well as a London problem—have worked heroically. But why should not thousands more soldiers help them? We hear constantly from soldiers that they are longing to come and do a job of work. The morale of the civil population would be vastly improved if they came. So, perhaps equally important, would the morale of the troops. Nothing so rots an army as idleness, and in this case the work that is wanted is to rescue the buried and clear up the mess in the cities they know and love.

Economic Notes (from an Industrial Correspondent)

Something of the complacency of the Chamberlain era has crept back into Ministerial Declarations. The curse of democracies that Ministers, in order to keep their jobs, must show good results, even if they do not exist, is at work again and is aggravated by the ready acceptance of their own publicity at its face value by the Ministers themselves. Yet the whole war-economic picture remains unsatisfactory. If the position does not warrant acute apprehension the trend is certainly alarming. The latest Nazi statistics show that the total budgetary expenditure of the Reich and local Governments during the summer was running at the rate of Rm. 63,000 millions from taxes and loans, that is to say excluding extra budgetary funds, special levies, the revenue of public undertakings and, last but not by any means least, the loot, tribute from enslaved countries. Excluding the last item and ignoring the gigantic amount of war-material captured, this indicates an expenditure on war alone of at least Rm. 55,000 millions or almost £4,000 millions. The war effort of the Axis Powers including tributes must have surpassed the £5,000 million mark. And it is well to remember that they had a great superiority over Britain alone in mechanised armaments at the outbreak of the war. Our war expenditure proper (excluding subsidies on food, etc.), of barely £3,000 millions appears definitely insufficient even if the Empire war effort and our peculiar strategic position is taken into account. The greater effectiveness of our bombing cannot close this "gap."

* * *

The required increase in our war effort demands the reorganisation of our economic system. On Tuesday, for the second time in recent weeks, a weekly shipping loss of over 100,000 tons was announced. We still are large gainers in the shipping field since the outbreak of the

war as a consequence of the accession of neutral shipping. And it is to be hoped that in spite of the extension of the obligations of the Navy in the Mediterranean the renewed outbreak of U-boat success will be as quickly and effectively mastered as were earlier waves. Nevertheless it seems folly not to prepare and make success doubly certain. The conservation and equitable distribution of available supplies cannot be secured except by strict rationing. At the same time measures must at last be taken to co-ordinate the often contradictory policies of single departments. And above all industry must be rationalised, priorities established and man-power compulsorily trained. The present method of relying on global financial controls and on the leisurely operation of collective bargaining has failed and will fail because it cannot fully mobilise us. Mr. Bevin has declared his faith in planning. But planning does not mean piecemeal intervention when difficulties have already arisen but co-ordination to forestall the difficulties.

* * *

The powers and functions of the new Works and Buildings Ministry remain very obscure. It will take over the Works and Buildings Priority Committee, and will thus become the body responsible for deciding what buildings and similar works are to have preference in the supply of essential materials; and it will also inherit the functions—and therewith presumably some of the traditions—of the Office of Works, a department which has never been remarkable for initiative except when George Lansbury galvanised it into action for a brief period under the second Labour Government. The service departments, however, have evidently insisted on maintaining their independence; and it seems clear that the new Ministry has been given no powers that will enable it to handle any of the larger tasks of reconstruction. It will be allowed to plan, if it likes; but the execution of its plans will be a matter for the Ministry of Health, or the Board of Education, or whatever Government department happens to be concerned in accordance with the routine distribution of duties among the Ministries. This is altogether unsatisfactory. The very last thing that ought to occur is a rebuilding of destroyed and damaged properties on the old sites, without any attempt at comprehensive replanning in the light of twentieth-century conditions. But this is exactly what will occur unless the Government takes and uses drastic powers to prevent it.

* * *

The Labour Party and the Trade Unions have decided to renew at once their demand for the removal of the family means test. Its removal would not cost a great deal under present conditions; and it would do away with a grievance which is still acutely felt not only among the sufferers, but throughout the working classes. The Labour bodies are not asking that there shall be no means test—only that it shall be put on a personal instead of a family or household basis. They want young persons of working age and persons living in the household to be ignored for the purposes of the test, which would thus become applicable only to the earnings of husbands and wives. This is an entirely reasonable suggestion; and unless it is speedily adopted it will not be easy to persuade Labour people that their representatives in the Cabinet are really pulling their weight. There are indeed increasing signs of restiveness among the Local Labour Parties, whose members are also wondering when the Trade Disputes Act of 1927 is to be repealed, and when any real consideration is to be given to the proposals for war-time family allowances which were discussed in last week's issue of this paper.

* * *

Mr. Donald Barber, who speaks with authority on behalf of the retail trades, had an interesting letter in the *Times* about the pricing of goods under the Purchase Tax. He pointed out that in effect, whatever the Chancellor of the Exchequer might say, many traders would average prices between new and old stocks, in order to avoid having two sets of prices running simultaneously for the same articles. This may be against the law; but it is certain to happen, and it is indeed plain common sense where traders have to hold a wide range of sizes and shapes of such things as gloves or stockings. The danger, of course, is that "averaging" may be made a cloak for charging the consumers with the Purchase Tax on new and old stocks alike, and practices of this sort cannot be easily detected once averaging is allowed at all. Presumably this is the reason for not allowing it; but what is the trader to do? Keep old and new stocks apart, and give first-comers the benefit of the old prices? Presumably, yes, where that can readily be done; but there are a good many instances in which it cannot be done without great difficulty and an addition to overhead costs. I predict that many traders will "average," and that nothing will be done to bring them to book.

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NEXT TUESDAY

THE drama of this war, even before it began, turned on the relations of the belligerents to the neutrals, and the last Act may repeat the theme of the first. Some of these neutrals were bought, some seduced and others raped. Among them the U.S.A. alone is raised by its position and its stature above such approaches. On a long view the campaign that ends in next Tuesday's poll may be a military event more decisive than any we have yet witnessed on land, in the air or at sea. We see no reason why we should wrap up our meaning in tactful ambiguities. Under all the reticence of British official utterances and in spite of the restraint of the daily Press, Americans know well that British people must necessarily want them to "come in." It may be that up to this stage the best help this unready giant could give us was to supply us with rifles, tanks and planes. But if that is the extent of her share in the work of defeating Fascism and in building a peaceful world, can we confidently hope for a decision? The issue is much wider than the range of our own interests. Take, for example, the case of the Dutch East Indies. Japan will continue to draw oil from them for the destruction of the Chinese Republic, until America is prepared to use her Fleet to guarantee these colonies. As we read Mr. Roosevelt's record, he is the one of the two candidates in the field who might, if re-elected, act boldly in such a case as this and in similar emergencies as they arise. He views this conflict with a perception of the values at stake which no politician who speaks for finance-capital will ever attain. Morally he has the qualities and the range of mind that justify leadership on a world-wide stage.

But it is not primarily on any reading of the personalities of the two men that we base our judgment. Mr. Willkie has a good deal of independence and is far from being the conventional candidate who is managed by the party machine. But the whole meaning of his candidature is that it reflects the revolt of propertied America against the New Deal. If he reaches the White House, his policy must reflect the mind of Wall Street and Big Business. One may be aware of a strain of unconventional and almost juvenile originality in his vital personality, but he is fundamentally the shrewd man of business, who became a multi-millionaire by rather dubious stock-exchange operations and by exploiting to the full the opportunities that monopoly and combination confer in the sale of electrical power. He played a typical part among the dinosaurs of the financial jungle. The problem, then, that confronts us is how far, with all their superficial sympathy, the calculations of Wall Street and Big Business about this war differ from the spontaneous, emotional attitude of "the forgotten man" to whom Mr. Roosevelt appeals.

Some symptoms and indications catch the eye at once. The Republican Party began the campaign by a bid for the isolationist vote, for it chose as its candidate for the vice-presidency that stout isolationist, Senator McNary. Again, all the Fascist and pro-German groups, notably Father Coughlin's following, are supporting Mr. Willkie, though he has rejected their help. Latterly Mr. Willkie has hotly attacked the President with the charge that he is deliberately leading America into the war, and he has done this in a way that will tie his own hands tightly, if he should find himself in office next January. It is possible, however, to make too much of this point, for Mr. Willkie attacks on every conceivable ground: he has even made the absurd and irresponsible accusation that Mr. Roosevelt was to blame for the betrayal of the Czechs at Munich. For our part, we lay more stress on the habitual attitude of the mind of Big Business, in so far as it has disclosed itself. It is eager to support the heaviest expenditure on American re-armament, though it is apt to kick at any increase in direct taxation. It is equally forthright in backing the far from unprofitable supply of arms to this country, though it insists that the control of this effort shall be placed in its own hands, and opposes the very moderate provision in the Conscription Act which authorises

the Administration to take over workshops at a fair rent. But re-armament is not, in its view, a preparation for any inevitable struggle against aggressive Imperialism, whether Nazi or Japanese. Mr. Hoover probably spoke its mind last July at Philadelphia, when in a speech that Mr. Chamberlain might have delivered at any time before the fall of Prague, he said that the United States should arm, in order to reach at the appropriate moment a friendly and mutually advantageous understanding with Germany. The Wall Street mind still believes that the Nazis can be tamed and bought, and that they will have to respect and lean upon the overwhelming economic resources of America. It does not realise that these barbarians aim at power for power's sake and not at economic welfare. It does not realise that in the world of to-day the bomber is a mightier force than the dollar. What is in its mind emerged clearly in a poll recently conducted among 15,000 " business executives " by the magazine *Fortune*. The question was put to them whether after the war they would favour the utmost development of trade with a Hitlerised Europe. Of the big majority that answered in the affirmative it turned out that 70 per cent. of Mr. Willkie's supporters were for a policy of economic rapprochement with a Nazified Europe, while only 9 per cent. of Mr. Roosevelt's followers were of this mind. We take this to mean that while Big Business would doubtless prefer a British victory and will help it along in the way of trade for cash down, it still believes that America could live comfortably with a Nazi Empire on a normal footing of peaceful trade. Men who cherish this delusion will not risk more for the liberty of mankind than they have risked already.

Mr. Roosevelt faces the Nazi threat in a very different spirit. To assess his chances coldly may not be easy, but the straw-polls are a considerable help. Unfortunately, there are several of them and they show a wide divergence. Those of Dr. Gallup have a deserved reputation for accuracy, but in this case there may be disturbing factors that he has not allowed for. He classifies and weights his results according to the age, income-level and occupation of those who answer his questions. But should not racial origin also figure in his weighted groupings? German or Italian origin may affect a man's vote more decisively than the level of his income. These polls showed that Mr. Willkie began well, then lost some of this promise, but seemed more recently to regain the lost ground. Of the voters who had made up their minds Roosevelt had in August 51 per cent. against 49 for Willkie. On September 20th, Roosevelt had 55 to Willkie's 45 per cent. But at the end of October Roosevelt's percentage had dropped slightly to 54.5, while Willkie's had risen to 45.5. This trend would not be disturbing were it not that in several of the pivotal States the vote is likely to be decided by very narrow majorities. New York State, if we may trust the latest of these polls, is now by 51 per cent. for Wilkie. Thanks to the system of indirect election a President may be chosen by a minority of the voters.

The impressions made in the last week may well have a decisive effect on the indifferent elector who does not normally trouble to vote at all. European events will certainly make their impact on him. The peculiarly cynical attack on Greece may shock him and alarm him, and should on our reading of tendencies incline him to cast his vote for Mr. Roosevelt. This may, indeed, touch his imagination so strongly that it will overshadow other influences. But the attack of Mr. John Lewis on the President will certainly cost him some part of the Labour vote. Mr. Lewis is a man of unusual ability and energy with some of the gifts of a born leader, and his services in organising the unskilled and semi-skilled, more especially miners and negroes, in his industrial unions entitle his views to the attention of the workers. But few would rate his character as high as his forceful intelligence: his reputation is that of an ambitious and far from scrupulous man. We do not know what quarrel behind the scenes may account for his vehement attack on the President. Certainly on his record Mr. Roosevelt has done incomparably more to earn the vote of organised Labour than any President before him. Mr. Willkie, on the other hand, was the head of a group of companies whose conduct has been exposed in Congressional inquiries. They one and all ran " company unions " and refused, until the law compelled them, to recognise the men's own unions. They all carried on the class war with more than the customary reliance on tear gas, hired gangsters and Pinkerton's detectives. That Mr. Lewis should support a candidate with such a background is so startling that he may fail to carry more than a fraction of the Labour vote: his own union, the miners, is for Roosevelt. Finally, many votes will be affected by the President's five speeches and broadcasts during this last week. Hitherto he has been silent and took no personal part in the campaign. His record spoke for him. Sober men noted that his great office kept him busy at Washington, while his rival talked with irresponsible volubility. But speech may help him now, even better than silence. No one can be sure of the result, for against this unusual and sympathetic man all the forces of property and most of the newspapers are leagued. We await with anxious hope a vote that may decide the future of four continents.

THE WAR IN THE NORTH

Of course the North has had it pretty badly. That is obvious to anyone from the communiqués. Few days pass without reports of raids on Merseyside, " North-West " or " North East " towns or the " South-West " or " South-East " of Scotland, all officially vague but generally identifiable, keep on recurring.

So a tour of the bombed areas of the North might seem like jumping, if not out of the frying pan into the fire, at least out of the fire into the frying-pan. I can honestly say, however, that the only night's sleep I missed through raids during a fortnight's tour of investigation for the *Daily Herald* was when London was being heavily bombed. That was because I stayed up all night in the Manchester office keeping in touch with my colleagues who had " gone to ground " in London under terrific bombardment. There were warnings but without the " trimmings," which would disturb a seasoned campaigner like myself—" seasoned " that is, by being a Londoner during the first five weeks of the Blitzkrieg. Indeed the most trying part of the tour was the ordeal of travel—ten hours from Euston to Manchester, and fourteen hours from Manchester to Glasgow. And in neither case was the delay due to enemy action. The first was caused by the runaway luggage barrow which derailed an express train and in the other a wayward waggon which broke loose.

Almost as trying was the effort to avoid seeming callous and unkind. It is not easy to tell people who have had repeated raids that, by comparison with London, they scarcely know what bombing means. Yet that is true of every part of the North which I visited. Even Merseyside, which has passed its 200th raid and which, next to London, is the most heavily bombed part of the country, cannot be compared with anything in London. Its raids have been mainly during the past 10 weeks. Yet I question whether the total damage of the cities and towns of the Mersey is a third of that in any one of the riverside boroughs. Apart from extensive fire damage to warehouses in one part of Liverpool, which was restricted by the fire-services and which certainly had few dislocating effects, the bombs have been dispersed and, as usual, working-class districts have suffered. But a colleague in Liverpool had to act as a guide to enable me to find the damage and, because clearance of debris had been more rapid and thorough than in London, to tell me what was bomb-destruction and what was normal demolition.

From a record which I have seen of the number of bombs dropped in Scotland during 13 months of war, including the attacks on Scapa Flow, I should say that it is not as great as the total for any week in London since September 7th. Newcastle, as one official there put it, has " scarcely even been dented " despite persistent attempts.

As for Manchester it is still at the " gather-round-boys-and-hear-about-my-bomb " stage. Any bomb within a mile is a " near-shave " and when I told them that in London we wore lapel-button with " I'm not interested in your bomb " on it they took it not as a joke but as an insult. Indeed the only place where, so far, I have sensed anxiety was in Manchester. There was certainly none in Liverpool, for instance, where the people are as solid and as stolid about the raids as they are in London.

In Glasgow, I was introduced as " an unkilted member of the London Scottish, just back from the front line " and found that at public dinners they were coupling with the toast of the Army, Navy and Air Force " and the people of London." But I found too that they were thinking of the Battle of London as we used to think of the Siege of Madrid—something magnificent but some way off. That is a matter for concern. With the lesson of London before them, local authorities must imagine the worst and then add a margin to it.

Most of what I found was reassuring. The arrangements for dealing with the homeless, one of my main preoccupations, in each place were certainly encouraging, although nowhere, not even on Merseyside, had they been put to the same desperate tests as in London. Not had the plans, which were, on scrutiny, admirable, been improvised in the light of London's experience. Liverpool, galvanised by the dynamic personality of Mr. Molyneux, its P.A.C. Officer, made the arrangements, which I saw, eighteen months ago. Just as the A.R.P. services have their control-rooms, so has the Liverpool welfare services. The " control " is in a subterranean office, linked to the other services so that an " incident " is immediately notified, and to its centres for

dealing with the homeless throughout the city. In it hangs an "Operations Map" with multi-coloured studs marking the sites of the various area offices, rest centres and auxiliary centres, any one of which can be called instantly into action.

In case "H.Q." should be bombed this control room is reproduced in, and synchronised with, four other Area H.Q's, one of which would immediately take over. Each of these Area H.Q.s is equipped with emergency stores of blankets, bedding, food and so on, even to baby's feeding-bottles and diapers, as well as with cooking facilities (not forgetting field kitchens in case the gas or electric supplies fail) and hot-containers for transport. That is in case any of the food and rest centres, equipped and provisioned in the same way, should ever be overtaxed or new centres should have to be called into commission. Corporation kitchens provide the hot meals.

Finding homes or billets has not, so far, presented any difficulties and if they should arise Liverpool is prepared to meet them by drastic requisitioning. But I was encouraged to find that Liverpool does realise that the homeless are casualties and require as kindly handling as though they had lost a limb instead of a home. The Assistance Board and Billeting Officers go to them and there are no "Grapes of Wrath" wanderings from one department to another.

My heart warmed to Mr. Molyneux, the official who acts righteously first and argues financially afterwards. And it warmed, too, to Capt. Embleton, Chairman of the Newcastle A.R.P. committee and Deputy Controller. To Capt. Embleton, Newcastle owes its "Relief Officers." These are those "Welfare Officers" (as I prefer to call them) who, I have suggested, should move into the scene of the bombings alongside the "Incident Officers" who direct the A.R.P. Services. They gather up the homeless, make them feel befriended and cared for, tell them exactly what can and will be done for them, in the way of finding new homes, getting compensation and so on, and take them, by coach if need be, to the Food and Rest Centres. The need for such officers was so forcibly illustrated by the hapless people who were left wandering among the ruins of their London homes, that I felt sure that Newcastle had taken the lesson from them. But no, the system had been in existence for months before London was heavily bombed.

Switching back to Merseyside, Birkenhead, until my visit, had been one of those anonymous "North-West Towns" and the folks had resented it; they were rather proud of the way they had behaved under bombs. I was able to say that they had been bombed and how well they had dealt with their homeless. It is rather nice because, although it was a case of organisation, the spirit is neighbourliness. Everybody, including the officials, seems to know everybody else by their Christian names. It comes in useful in finding homes. The Billeting Officer is not billeting; he is finding new homes and furnishing them, with the matey co-operation of the Assistance Board officials and the help of the Mayor, Mr. W. H. Egan, who had got hold of furniture and stored it throughout the town. The officer knows his people well enough to say, "Oh, Mysie couldn't go to Such-and-Such a Street, she'd not get on with Mrs. Brown. But she'd be all right alongside Mrs. Smith."

Manchester and Glasgow both have highly developed and well-conceived organisations for dealing with the homeless. Both had been planned well ahead. But the finest rest centre which I have seen was in Newcastle. It is asking almost too much but I wish it could be the model for the other parts of the country. It started off with the advantage of being the palatial mansion of a coal-and-finance magnate, with solid walls that might have been built to withstand a siege. Its stately, panelled ballroom has been set aside as the dining-hall ("refectory" would be more apt) for the homeless. Other rooms have been converted into cheerful bedrooms, filled with inviting truckle beds. There are showers and hot baths. Every room has a coal fire (important alike for cooking and heating) but hot-water bottles are provided. The capacious cellars and vaults have been turned into air-raid shelters, heated by the hot pipes of the central-heating system. Newcastle goes on the sound principle of getting the homeless out of the Rest Centres as soon as possible into homes or billets. That is wise, because of the risks and the discomforts of the average Rest Centre. But I should not worry unduly about those who might, by unforeseen reasons, be stranded there. They would be comfortable and safe.

That kind of house is not found conveniently close to bombed working-class areas as a rule, but they are to be found in outer suburbs of towns, relatively safe, and lending themselves to adaptation. Since it is so essential to get people clear of a bombed area as soon as possible, why not transfer people from "Front Line" Rest Centres to hostels such as that one, assuming similar shelter accommodation?

Another main concern was the shelter-problem. And in most places I found cause for misgiving. Until people have experience of all-night raids, the need for dormitory shelters does not come home very forcibly. Once they have to contemplate the possibility of spending a freezing winter's night in an Anderson, a surface or even a basement shelter, people begin to understand lots of things which have happened in London. Everywhere in the North there is agitation about deep shelters. The Communists are "cashing in" and, of course, rousing all kinds of political resistances.

Most ordinary people in the North and in Scotland would swear by their "Andersons" if they did not have cause to swear at them. But in Manchester, for instance, I found women baling out the water preparatory to bedding down their children for the night. One woman took over 40 bucketfuls out of hers. In many cases I found that the shelters had been sunk into the land-drainage ducts or with complete disregard for the obvious nature of the soil. The clamour, including deputations to the Corporation and the "ambush" of Sir Harry Haig, the Commissioner, by women when he visited a housing estate, is for proper waterproofing. The excuse is, as always, lack of cement. But what about tarmac and bitumen and other waterproofing agents?

In Liverpool, the surface shelters are "well-patronised," but I have seen enough samples of materials used in the structure of some of them to know that many of them ought to be, and must be, condemned. In Glasgow controversy rages over deep shelters. The exponents are not confined to the Communists. Far from it. Personally, I did not mean to get embroiled. I took a detached view. I was given details of "work done" and "work in hand," but what impressed me a great deal more was direct observation. I know the Glasgow slums and the working-class tenements pretty well and, without official escort, I went to see for myself. The conclusions were disturbing. Baffle walls at the open mouths of the entrances to tall tenement buildings do not seem good enough to me. Even if I accepted the safety-factor, I know these "closes" on a winter's night and I would no more shelter in them than in a refrigerator. Alternative surface shelters seemed far from adequate.

Glasgow is a city of indispensable workers. They need sleep. Where will they get it if all-night raids start? They themselves will tell you "in oor beds." Lots of us vowed that once. I was told that deep shelters in Glasgow are impossible. I was even told that the City was "built on rock." So I went to my friends the geologists. Glasgow, they assured me, is largely built on "drumlins," little hills of boulder clay. Tenement streets climb steeply up and down them. Lanarkshire has miners. Scotland has brilliant mining engineers. I think there is a job for them.

Edinburgh I found alive and alert on the shelter problem, although with a lot to do. It is, like Glasgow, a city of tall, solidly built stone buildings. Some of them have stood three hundred years and more. But Edinburgh has houses built on steep slopes and, consequently to reach street level they have as many as three layers of cellars. It is estimated that 80,000 people could be accommodated in one kind of basement or another. To provide dormitory deep-shelter for workers a stretch of deep railway tunnel is being taken over. Caves on the outskirts are likely to be converted and as far as I could judge, the authorities would be open-minded to any deep-shelter suggestion.

It is Newcastle, however, which deserves the medal. Without waiting for grants it provided for 2½ miles of admirable deep shelter, in which, as Embleton said: "You can not only sleep in safety; you can walk to safety." True, that tunnel was a "gift." It was a coal-haulage way, 60 to 80 feet underground. The City converted it. And it would not acquire particular merit for doing something so obvious, if it had not shown real imagination as well.

For example, there is a culvert, carrying a stream for three-quarters of a mile underground. It is a spacious culvert. Newcastle turned it into one of the finest deep shelters in the country—by the simple device of flooring it over well above spate level. And the result is a commodious, clean, naturally ventilated, well-lit, well-equipped shelter, capable of sleeping thousands. Again, the Corporation had sanctions for a new drainage scheme. The Engineer was told to make the drain big enough and deep enough underground to make into a shelter, its drainage function being postponed for the duration. A mine "drift" is being converted, to provide deep shelter for workers who need dormitory accommodation. And there is another scheme so ingenious and yet so obvious that the censors will not let me mention it because it would provoke the bombers. It is true that Newcastle has used existing facilities, but it has also used its brains.

What I have tried to impress upon everyone whom I have talked to in the North is that the lesson of London has to be learned quickly or it will be learned tragically. The Battle of London is only a phase in The Battle of Britain.

RITCHIE CALDER

A LONDON DIARY

SCRAMBLING for the *Times*, as every Englishman does on great occasions, I found, as I expected, that the latest move of the Axis was really a British success. By invading Greece the Italians have dangerously lengthened their flank. The move is an open confession of the bankruptcy of the main campaigns of the enemy. We are greatly heartened by the spectacle of an opponent who has missed his main objective and now strikes out in other directions in the hope of retrieving his failure by some skilful diversion or some lucky blow. Most encouraging of all is the sure knowledge that this bid to attain victory by devious ways will strengthen the will to resist of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Turkey. And so on. Surely we remember the *Times* saying something very like this before? When the Germans went into Norway they dangerously lengthened their flank. If they are not careful they will become all flank as far as Gibraltar. When the Italians overran British Somaliland they further exposed themselves to attack, besides landing themselves with a territory which as an advertisement for our colonial policy we had kept barren. If the Nazis were to reach London Bridge it would be a British triumph. The *Times* would explain that, by so dangerously lengthening their flank, they had stuck themselves in one of the least salubrious parts of London, that they would find it difficult to get a respectable meal in the district and that they would use up a lot of their scanty oil resources in getting the Tower Bridge up and down. Moreover, they would be under the direct and close observation of Printing House Square.

* * *

A letter which appears in the correspondence columns of this issue summarises some of the allegations made by Conscientious Objectors, who were detained in Dingle Camp, near Liverpool. Many of the details—the systematic beating-up and night and day bullying—closely resemble the accounts (published in the British Government's White Paper) of Nazi treatment of a German religious sect which refuses military service. The resemblance is unpleasant—especially when we recall Mr. Chamberlain's promise that Britain would not repeat the last war's mistakes in the treatment of Objectors. But in England most C.O.s are free, even though many of them are foolishly deprived of work; this beating-up is a lamentable incident, not a national policy. British citizens are not put into concentration camps for life and flogged and maltreated till they die or commit suicide. Secondly, in Germany those things go on all the time, and no one can even protest, much less compel an inquiry. Parliament is still our safeguard; the War Office is holding an inquiry. Our job is to see to it that it is no white-washing affair. We should add that information reaches us from other C.O.s, who have accepted "non-combatant service" that their treatment under the same Command near Liverpool has been sympathetic and courteous. The brutalities appear not to have been ordered by those immediately in charge of the C.O.s. That such incidents should have occurred at all is a disgrace.

* * *

Mr. H. G. Wells has been thoroughly offensive in the United States. He likes being offensive and would not be himself if he were not. He was silly enough to say something to the effect that "Jerry" was already as good as beaten. He was sensible enough to say out loud some of the trenchant things about our generalship that other people have been muttering *sotto voce*. The matter was raised in the House by Earl Winterton, who denounced him as an agnostic republican, a sixth columnist, a denigrator of Lord Halifax and an approach to a blackguard. He even implied that he was not a gentleman. In any case Earl Winterton was positive that Mr. Wells was not representative of Britain. Now, whatever his limitations, Mr. Wells will have a sizable niche in history, and Britain will be very proud of having produced him. If Earl Winterton goes down to history it will be mainly as an illustration of the dire confusion which is apt to be created by the nomenclatural vagaries of the British peerage. Earl Winterton was formerly Viscount Turnour. Just after his step-up in the hierarchy he was in a mixed discussion in which his name was not enunciated for some considerable time. "Good Lord," said one of the company apologetically, "I've been sitting here for the last hour thinking you were that objectionable young cub Turnour."

* * *

The magistrate at Tower Bridge Court has declared that where, by reason of a time bomb or other enemy action adjacent to a property, tenants are ordered to leave and are absent for, say, a week or more there is a frustration of contract which relieves the tenant from liability to pay rent while he is so absent from his house. Various interests have hastened to emphasise that this was merely the view of a single magistrate and that the law is by no means definite on this point. Whether or not the law takes the same view enunciated by the magistrate this is one of the cases, like the use of the Tubes as shelters, where the public will decide for itself. Tenants will not pay rent for premises which they cannot occupy and the law will not be permitted to make an ass of itself on this matter. Moreover even if we are not actually dislodged by a bomb we shall expect rebates if we are deprived of gas, water, electricity and telephone services for any prolonged period. These problems will keep on cropping up because in spite of Ministerial eloquence about everyone being in the front line and about total war, the island fortress and the battle of Britain, there is no consistent and universal policy of sacrifice but merely successive shuffles from one expedient to another. But no expedient will collect the rent for vacated houses. If the grocer sends in a bill for cheese which he is unable to deliver our regretful reply is *Point de Suisse, point d'argent*.

* * *

Under a new decree of the Home Office a number of distinguished writers and artists are to be released from our internment camps. I hope that among the first will be Kurt Jooss. In the last days of June Jooss and Sigurd Leeder, who were in London awaiting the last visa formalities before leaving to join the Ballets Jooss in South America, were summarily arrested and carried off, the one to Huyton, the other to the Isle of Man. Since then it has been a game of cat and mouse. First they could only be released if they were prepared to emigrate unconditionally. This was agreed to, though both had been on the brink of naturalisation when the war broke out. A new case was prepared and the support of another Government office enlisted on the grounds that the Ballet was doing valuable propaganda work in South America, of an anti-Nazi nature. This fresh application was supported by several eminent names, and the Home Office, its interest apparently piqued by reports of the propaganda value of the Jooss Ballet, and particularly of the famous *Chronica*, which depicts in terms of dance the downfall of a dictator, was frequently on the 'phone, requesting press-cuttings, programmes and proof that the Ballet was giving performances in aid of the British Red Cross. Release, on the assurance of the Home Office, seemed to be only a matter of days, and pupils of the Dance School as well as Jooss's wife and little daughter went up to London to welcome the released prisoners. Then again silence set in. It was broken at last by the Home Office declaring on September 10th, that a new application had been received on behalf of Jooss, which made delay "inevitable." It has since been impossible to discover from the Home Office, in spite of repeated efforts, by whom this application was made. Owing to inexplicable postal delays it was not till the middle of October that it was learnt that Jooss had in fact never made such an application nor had any correspondence with the Home Office at all, till September 23 when, under strong pressure by the authorities at Huyton, he did make an application under Category 19, which provides for the release of those who have shown anti-Nazi bias. No doubt his case is typical of many others. Some of these men know better how to fight Nazi ideas than most of our own experts. We would rather trust them than Prince Starhemberg.

* * *

A correspondent who comments on recent remarks about Christianity in this column points out an absurdity that has always bothered me. About a month ago, when announcing another national Day of Prayer, the Archbishop of Canterbury pointed out that since the former Day of Prayer the responsibilities and difficulties of the British Empire had immensely increased. His remedy was another Day of Prayer. The concluding hymn of the B.B.C. service that day (which was addressed by the Archbishop himself) is a familiar favourite. It includes the lines:

> Sufficient is Thine arm alone
> And our defence is sure.

Now what do people mean by that? In the obvious sense of defence the sentiment seems merely hypocritical. We rely, I think, on the Navy, the R.A.F., the A.A. barrage and the thickness of the cement wall which the more fortunate put between themselves and death. The words are meant in some other spiritual sense? Perhaps, but if so, it needs explaining. Even the security of souls, most people believe, would be menaced by a Hitler victory: the spiritual life of a community does not flourish in a concentration camp, even though a few saints may prove their faith in martyrdom. No, I can make nothing of these lines except a vain repetition.

My favourite poet provides me with the following comment:

The Nazi evil is our datum,
Its downfall our desideratum,
Its extirpation our agendum,
Without proviso or addendum,
Therefore, *Quod erat demonstrandum*,
Make victory our propagandum.

* * *

The war has brought a new spirit of tolerance into the Empire. I hear that none of the white delegates to the Delhi Conference had any difficulty in getting into a hotel.

* * *

Announcement: Maximum price for frozen cod.
Times to remain at 2*d*. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Howard Mann.
All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," c/o The Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, S.E.1.

C. Ida Desborough, Gerrards Cross, Bucks, urges people to plant oaks in every available space for the sake of our future Navy.—*The Daily Sketch.*

What is Christianity? It is the religion of Christ—long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, justice, kindness; "against such there is no law." I would in the first place use our Air Force to bomb Berlin thoroughly and continuously until it lay in ruins.—Correspondent in the *Glasgow Herald.*

A number of Scouts have obtained the Interpreter's badge through German or Italian. Whilst these boys should continue to wear the badge itself, it is considered advisable for the time being that they should cease to wear the label stating the actual language. This is largely in their own interests.—*Western Mail and South Wales News.*

"I can tell you," said Mr. Wakefield, "that this constituency would be better represented by a Socialist than by our member of Parliament. That is a very grave statement."—Daily papers.

I have not met a girl who does not treasure the memory of the few words spoken personally by the Chief Controller on her innumerable tours round the depots: and leave us also our titled women in high places, or the milk of human kindness will dry up.—Letter in *News Review.*

Glimpses here and there of the unceasing activities of the Army make up a virile patchwork picture amid the flaming tints of autumn. A fox breaks from the gorse as a troop of gunners go through the arduous business of getting their 6in. howitzers into position, and evokes all the sporting instincts of the major. "Isn't he a beauty!" he cries, and soberly reflects that his battery will be far more mobile when they have pneumatic tyres.—*Times.*

THE FEAR OF DEATH

IT is natural to fear death. "Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark," says Bacon. But what a "to do" people have made about it, especially in antiquity. Look through any anthology of poetry and you will be surprised at the enormous number of entries which concern themselves either directly or indirectly with death's terrors. And no doubt death is formidable, especially, perhaps, for those who do not believe in a life beyond. "Death," says Aristotle, with his usual abruptness, "is a dreadful thing; it is the end." If, of course, we believe in immortality the position is different; witness the queries in the celebrated hymn:—

Where is death's sting? Where Grave thy victory?

though, for my part, I agree with Adam in Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* in regarding the prospect of eternal life with even greater apprehension than that of death.

If only there may be an end some day, and yet no end. If only I can be relieved of the horror of having to endure myself for ever! If only the care of this terrible garden may pass on to some other gardener . . . If only the rest and sleep that enable me to bear it from day to day could grow, after many days, into an eternal rest, an eternal sleep, then I could face my days however long they may last. Only there must be some end. Some end; I am not strong enough to bear eternity.

Quite so! But this is not, I think, the light in which most people view the matter; which is, I suppose, why the fear of death has been strong in proportion as the belief in immortality has been weak. And precisely because people have been so terribly afraid of death, moralists and philosophers have never tired of telling them not to be afraid of it. Because death is fearful, they have assured them that it is not; and because it is not, we must not, they say, be afraid of it. *Timor mortis, morte pejor*: Burton cites the Latin proverb with approval in *The Anatomy*, while Montaigne quotes another to the effect that death has less of fear about it than the expectation of it: *Morsque minus pœnæ quam mora mortis habet.* Seneca proses on interminably assuring us that just as after death there is nothing, so dying itself is nothing. There is, I cannot help thinking, a touch of disingenuousness about these asseverations. "Sir, all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, show it to be evidently a very great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune." Dr. Johnson's admirable comment upon arguments relating to poverty might, I think, be applied with equal force to arguments relating to death.

Among the variously platitudinous considerations with which I am acquainted, the only one which seems to me tolerably reassuring is that used by Socrates in the *Phædo*. The *Phædo*, one of the greatest of Plato's Dialogues, is singularly apposite at the present time, and may be read with great pleasure and profit by those who feel that their prospects of dying are rather greater than they were. Socrates argues more or less as follows: Nobody has ever had any experience of death. Therefore we do not know what being dead is like. Therefore we have no reason to suppose that it is worse than being alive; it might just as well be better. It is, therefore, irrational to dread that which might just as well be a change for the better as for the worse. This is not to say that we should welcome death; merely that our attitude should be non-committal. This seems to me to be reasonable. Everything that we know, we know either because we have experienced it ourselves or because we have heard of it from somebody who has experienced it—this, of course, includes the hearing of it by reading books—and whose testimony we are prepared to trust. Now we have not experienced death ourselves; if we had, we should not be alive to wonder about it, and we have not heard about death from anybody else, because if anybody were in a position to give us information on the subject, the mere fact of his being able to do so would show that he was not dead.

I venture to add one other consideration. There is a general agreement to the effect that we ought to be glad to be alive and do our best to make a good thing of life. That, since we *are* alive, we might as well make the best of it I agree, but I cannot see why it should be assumed that we should necessarily be glad of life and, by consequence, resentful of death. After all, we did not contemplate life in advance, decide on balance that it was a good thing and then deliberately choose it; we were pitchforked into life without so much as a by your leave. Hence, if life turns out badly, the fact is no reflection on our judgment or our choice, and we are, therefore, as I conceive it, under no obligation to pretend to ourselves that it is necessarily a good, or that leaving it is necessarily an evil. If life becomes more of a liability than an asset—and one would think that for some people at least it must be so—one would be well advised to quit it.

I conclude, then, that the fear of death has been exaggerated. It is certainly a fact that those people with whom I have recently discussed the matter seem to feel less of it than, if the poets and philosophers are to be believed, was felt by our ancestors. But what they do fear and what I fear is disablement and pain: the being blinded, burnt, mutilated or infected, the losing of a limb, the being tied for the rest of one's life to a broken and a pain-engendering body. This, I think, is what most of us fear from the bombs, this and the loss of our possessions. In so far as we fear death, it is, I suspect, largely because of the pain which dying involves. Death, as somebody remarked, would be all very well, were it not for the dying.

I suspect that there is a definite change of sentiment and valuation here. The ancients feared death but scarcely mentioned disablement or pain. We are more concerned with pain than with death. William James was, I think, the first to remark the change. "A strange moral transformation," he wrote, "has within the last century swept over our western world. We no longer think that we are called upon to face pain with equanimity. The way in which our ancestors looked upon pain as an eternal ingredient of the world's order, and both caused and suffered it as a matter of course, fills us with amazement." When we consider how much more formidable pain and disablement were to our ancestors than to ourselves, that the hurt man had no anæsthetic to relieve his pain, the disabled man no cars or trains to substitute for his legs, no cranes or lifts to serve as extra arms, no books to take the place of his ears, no wireless of his eyes, the change of sentiment is all the more remarkable.

What are the reasons for it? Here are four, none of them, I fear, very convincing. There is, first, the influence of Christianity. People

have believed and do believe that to die is to be transferred to a plane of being at once happier and more virtuous than this one. The belief has, of course, been accompanied by the rider that the plane of being to which one was transferred might be more miserable and less virtuous. The hope of heaven, in other words, has in most minds been qualified by the fear of hell. Apart, however, from the fear of hell, it is noticeable that Christians have not ceased to find death terrible. Dr. Johnson was a devout and a good man, yet Boswell speaks continuously of his horror of death. Johnson never, he says, "had a moment in which death was not terrible to him."

Secondly, it may be that the moderns fear injury because they are more familiar with it. Paradoxically, civilisation, which was to make the world safe, has made it dangerous. There were never so many ways in which a man can get hurt. Men are caught up in machinery, involved in railway accidents or disabled in mines. Above all, they are injured by cars—in 1938 226,854 of them in this country alone, and in America over a million. In the same year it is estimated that the number of people permanently mutilated by cars in England, the U.S.A., Germany, France and Italy, was over half a million. Meanwhile, films warning us against reckless driving by vividly picturing its effects have made us all disablement conscious.

Thirdly—and here I think we come to the root of the matter—we demand more of life than did our ancestors. We want life of a higher quality to be lived according to a higher standard, a quality which is incompatible with pain, a standard to which the maimed cannot conform. "It fills us with amazement," as William James says, "that people should ever have put up with pain so readily. One wonders that human beings could have been so callous." And why to us *do* they appear callous? Precisely because what was to them endurable and worth enduring would for us have made life no longer worth living. I suggest, then, that it is because we have come to entertain higher expectations of life that, if we cannot have life at a level at which it comes up to our expectations, we are prepared to do without it altogether. In a word, we are less tolerant of pain and less fearful of death because our standard of living has gone up.

Fourthly, the consciousness of many moderns has been imbued with the doctrines of creative evolution. We are instruments of life created by a purpose which transcends us and discarded when that purpose is served. If we are broken before our time, that is of little moment; life can create innumerable others to take our place. "The life to which I belong uses me," writes Wells, "and will pass beyond me and I am content." Life, in fact, is the end, individuality the means, and who, after all, are we to make such a fuss about the continuance of our personal selves? This is cold comfort and hard doctrine, but there are many, and these not the least admirable among our generation, to whom it appeals.

C. E. M. JOAD

QUEER LONGING

"THE soldiers themselves are longing for work." This curious sentence appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION last week, and it meant not that the soldiers were longing for action merely in the military sense of the word but that they were longing almost for any kind of activity, including such tasks as helping to clear up the debris in London and other cities after air raids.

I call the sentence curious, because it was a denial of much that I grew up to believe. As a child I was taught—or at least got the notion—that the compulsion to work was a curse laid on Adam because he could not control his appetite for fruit. If Adam had not loved apples as greedily as myself, I thought, he might have lived for ever in the leisurely fashion of a country gentleman instead of being doomed to the ill-paid industry of an agricultural labourer. There was no need to work in Eden but for the invasion of that one small corner of the orchard. Adam, however, lured by Eve, robbed the orchard like an irresponsible schoolboy, or aided and abetted in the robbery, and, in so doing, doomed, not only himself, but the rest of us, his progeny, to lives of unnecessary labour. "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread." I could not quite forgive Adam. And it was a long time before I could forgive Eve. The truth is I was a misogamist till the age of fifteen.

As I grew to years of discretion, however—say, eight or nine—I noticed that there were a number of people who seemed to do very little work and to have found an effective charm against Adam's curse so that they could lead beautifully idle lives. They were rich people who owned carriages and horses—landowners, for example—and I envied them. By the time I was twelve, I was dreaming of riches and perpetual indolence. Not that I wanted to be a millionaire. I was never excessive in my demands of life: a hundred thousand pounds would have been enough for me. But how I longed for that hundred thousand pounds! A life of perpetual entertainment—that was what I planned; a continuous party, with all my heroes in politics and football and all my cousins and other relations and friends as my guests from one year's end to the other. Never, even for a moment, did the shadow of work obscure the sunlight of that dream. I was a lifelong idler, dispensing hospitality to idlers in a large country house within view of the mouth of the Bann. That, for a considerable time, was my Paradise.

Among my schoolfellows I found that there was an equal antipathy to work. At least, none of them would admit that he ever did any work. To be suspected of working hard at our lessons was to earn the reputation of being, as we called it, a "stew." It was the ultimate word of contempt. The greatest "stews" in the school, if accused of the crime of work, defended themselves against the charge and lied like Ananias. The rest of us who saw them regularly at the top of the class, however, did not believe them. We realised that work was their secret vice and that they were, rightly, ashamed of themselves.

Into the midst of this moral chaos came Robert Louis Stevenson with his essay called "An Apology for Idlers." It was the honey of a gospel to young palates. So innocent were we that we failed to see that no honest idler could have written such an essay as "An Apology for Idlers." Or, perhaps, it would be nearer the truth to say that we thought of Stevenson as a hard worker in his own chosen way but as an idler in every way in which a schoolboy wishes to be idle—an avoider of school tasks, a micher from classes, a precocious smoker of tobacco by the edge of a stream during school hours. We half convinced ourselves, indeed, that there was more wisdom to be found in loafing than from memorising such pedantic doggerel as:

> Masculine—er—or, and—o,
> —Os and—es increasing show.

A friend of mine, a young painter, once complained to me at the time of the impossibility of making his father see that an artist was working just as hard when he was hanging round street corners observing life as when he was sitting before an easel in a studio.

Even our elders, however, seemed to have criminal ideas about idleness. They believed in work for the young, but they paid particular respect to those who, either through inheriting money or through having made fortunes in business, were able to bring up their families to do nothing that anybody else would call work. The phrase, "the idle rich," was a mere Socialist taunt. To be one of the idle rich was the ordinary business man's dream. The Victorian gospel is commonly supposed to have been a gospel of work. It seems to me to have been much more a gospel of idleness.

I think it was that eminent anti-Victorian, Mr. Bernard Shaw, who first announced the discovery that to be idle—or at least, to be idle and rich—is to be bored. It is a thing that everybody ought to have noticed centuries ago. Complete idleness is only another name for inactivity, and is there any hell that could be much worse than that? Forbid an infant in the cradle to be active—opening and closing its tiny fingers and kicking out with its feet—and you will be doing something so cruel that you would deserve to be brought under the notice of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Try to limit the activity of a kitten or a puppy, and you will prove your blood-relationship to Torquemada. Few animals are happy without activity. Rather than be inactive the human young play games. The work-hating Victorians pretended to themselves that games were merely fun—a form of idleness—but, as professionalism came into sport, the pretence had to be abandoned, and now we all see that playing games is simply a highly specialised form of work. In the same way I regard fox-hunting, stag-hunting, and partridge-shooting as work. They are forms of activity adopted by desperate men and women in order to escape from the inactivity to which the possession of money seems to have doomed them. I would rather dig in a garden, and I look on gardening as hard work.

If you consider the amusements of mankind, indeed—mountaineering, playing the fiddle, contract bridge, attending race-meetings—you will find that they all appeal, not to the love of idleness, but to the passion for industry. They are escapist, but only in the sense that they provide a means of escape from doing nothing. Many people find that it is even better to write than to do nothing. Dr. Johnson was never more profoundly in error than when he said that no one but a fool ever wrote except for money. He did not realise that writing is for many people a sanctuary from the horrors of idleness. At all costs human beings must work. Work may have been the result of a curse laid on Adam, but to us, who have never known Eden, a still greater curse is idleness.

We have begun to realise this more clearly in modern times. To us the word "unemployed" has a painful significance. To quite a large number of Victorians to be unemployed was the same thing as to be unemployable; they genuinely believed that most people who were out of work did not want to work. This point of view is less common to-day: we know that there are a few born idlers who would rather be on the dole than at work, but we also know that the normal man is not happy unless his energy is being put to use. To go through life with his talents buried is not his notion of a life worth living. He is as eager for activity as the infant in the cradle or the kitten on the drawing-room floor. That is why even in an unjust world the working classes who are at work are on the whole so cheerful. They know that work, though from one point of view it may seem a form of slavery, is also one of the supreme luxuries. This is a paradox that I should not have understood at the age of fourteen, and yet even then some of the happiest men whom I knew were, so far as I could judge, farm labourers earning from eight to ten shillings a week.

Having thus by some mysterious means—perhaps, casuistry—become a convert to the gospel of work, I am inclined to think that there is a good deal of truth in the statement that "the soldiers themselves are longing for work." In recent months, I have certainly heard more soldiers complaining that there is too little to do than that there is too much to do. In a village in which a time-bomb fell during the week-end, the locally stationed soldiers were delighted to have a chance of using their energies on the dangerous task of digging it out. They volunteered *en masse* for the job, though not a man among them knew anything about time-bombs. I asked one of them whether specialists weren't sent round to do jobs of this kind. "They are," he said, "but we're determined to get the thing up before those fellows come, if we have to work like niggers." On ordinary afternoons they have little to do except stroll about or kick a football or play poker. And apparently as a relief from these comparatively idle pursuits, they welcome even the most dangerous occupation. Well, I have had many surprises in my life, but I have never had a greater surprise than when I discovered that human beings like work. But they do. It is the all but universal hobby. Bread and circuses? Nonsense. Bread, work and circuses is what men like, and it is surprising that so intelligent a race as the Romans never saw this.

Y. Y.

FUNK HOLE

THERE are fortresses within fortresses, there are refugees and refugees, as I found when I got the train at Euston which, breathing ever more heavily, carried a colossal load of the likes of me through an interminable day and threw us wearily out at Windermere. It was still Hitler's weather, the week Göring plastered London. It is an unexplained but far from unnoticed fact that the Lake District is out of this war. So many people have noticed it that the Lakes have never had such a summer as Hitler's Summer, and are likely to be brim full of a most unwonted population throughout Hitler's (or, as the case may be, Churchill's) Winter.

There are at least three classes of Lakeland refugees. The first and foremost in every sense are the First Classers. The First Classers are already nicely settled in. They want to know about the war, they want to talk about it, they want to hear its nasty noises off (a long way off), they hope they are not going to pay for it, and they are steeled to endure it—in the midst of as many home comforts and habitual amenities as may still upholster the keep of a beleaguered fortress. If you ask them about it, you learn how very difficult it is to know what to do for the best. There are many excellent reasons for a retreat into dignified inaction; everything is mentioned but the paramount necessity for cushions, but the hope that even this unexampled night of storm will blow itself out to a fine Old English morning with stocks booming, the classes in their places, the golf course shining in the dew, and unlimited butter on the breakfast table. The Second Classers are really no part of this refugee business. They are the Lakeland habitués, grinning rather grimly but clumping calmly off when they find their old quarters overflowing with First Classers at several times their price. Hitler or no, weather or no, there they are, windproofed, rucksacked, rude and ruddy on top, nailed at bottom; singly, in pairs, in straggling friendly droves, they carry their strong hairy legs of both sexes over the tops and into the remoter dales. The Third Classers are rather shabby about the eyes and mouth; they begin by looking, too often, up and over their shoulders. It takes them a day or two to know—to *know*—that this sky contains nothing but cloud, birds and sweet air by day, and is empty of all but stars and silence by night. They must learn this quickly. They have only about seven days before they return to the throbbing malice of other skies. They are, in various degrees, the bombed.

But we Thirds are pretty quick learners of the freedom of this fortress of bright air. I went up to Grisedale Hause by Great Tongue Ghyll on a September morning such as was sometimes made before the Nazis were heard of, and will, please God, be made again when we have done with them. It was easy to shuffle off the troglodyte fever bred of an air-raid shelter. It was easy to forget that we were fighting, and in the same instant to be sure, with a shock of surprise as clear as the gleam of Coniston in the backward distance, of exactly what we were fighting for. I breasted the pass into an icy wind. There at my right the great rocks folded and fell away down the long blue chasm of Grisedale, with great umber cloud shadows staining the blue and the hieroglyphics of Gavel pendant in the distance. Why, I shouted (speaking no word), you could drop all the lies Goebbels ever told in this tarn of cold steel and you would not stain its waters; you could let Göring's crew loose for a month in this amphitheatre of ancient explosions and at the end of that you might notice a scratch or two. The great green side of Dollywaggon invited me: I accepted. Grisedale became a narrow ribbon of tender green below me; Swirral and Striding coiled like snakes into my view; in the distance was the sea at Morecambe. On Helvellyn top I met an old man with intent blue eyes, a spade beard, and a map. He was revolving slowly on his axis, memorising all the jewels and peaks of Lakeland. He looked like a parachutist on a mission which had nothing to do with Munich. I went down towards Thirlspot, my eyes and ears purged at last, my legs going very fast. Too fast; I fell and smashed my spectacles. But I reached the pub seeing clearer than for many a day, and though there was no rum butter for tea my digestion was working.

Unfortunately, Helvellyn the fortress cannot be slept on. I had to limp back, in a state of dangerous exaltation, to the Lake Hotel, to Mrs. Fullalove and Mr. Grating, to Miss Spatchcock and Dr. Gott, Mrs. Trumpington and the Nielsens. It is only natural to think a first-class compartment is an infernally stuffy place if you are fool enough to be caught there with a third-class ticket. The eyes of Miss Manning the manageress seemed to say as much when they rested speculatively on me and my like. Her job, at any rate, was clear, and well she did it. It was to keep the war off Mrs. Fullalove and her tribe by ministering to their appetites. Mrs. Fullalove, whose problem was mainly gastronomic, is fairly easy to manage, in spite of the appearance of the ominous conjunction OR on the menus. Mrs. Fullalove is an authority on souls, on the sheer joy of living, on being kind to people and understanding them, on everything but the abysms of her ignorance and her omission ever to have done a day's work. She speaks on these subjects in triplicate. "If only these clever unhappy people would stop talking and writing about *ugly* things, if only they would forget about socialism and capitalism and give their *idealism* a chance, what a *beautiful* place the world would be. Why, my dear, you can get simply *anything* you want from people if your first thought is *their* happiness. And that's why I say this war is so *unnecessary*." Yes, Mrs. Fullalove, but what is *necessary?* Well, Mrs. Fullalove's titbits are necessary. Watch her, birdlike, twittering, chattering, fussily gushing, as she screws the last ounce of food and service from the smiling parlourmaids. As I watch her gaily criticising the menu my mouth is full of the ashes of Barcelona, Prague, Warsaw (and now Stepney). One of those unnecessary thoughts, as unnecessary as to watch Mrs. Fullalove being helpful to poor Mrs. Nielsen, who had a perfectly *incredible* time, my dear, getting away from Oslo, and now never puts down her handbag for one moment because it is full of diamonds, and, well—you never know, do you? (But Mrs. Fullalove is getting to know.)

Old Mr. Grating, who desires news, is a harder case. The sun draws a flaming arc of time across the lawns of the Lake Hotel, the day passes in a dream of fruitful peace, but for Mr. Grating, hand on his watch, fuming at his pipe, there is no peace, for letters are days late, the *Times* does not arrive, the *Manchester Guardian*, which does, only increases his testiness, and the wireless grows hour by hour more jungle-like in tone. I have a horrid vision of Mr. Grating in the last stage of news-starvation, his hand on the knob of a broken wireless set, clutching last week's *Times*. The news he wants will never arrive, not even the *Times* arriving miraculously for breakfast could supply it. So Miss Manning can do little for him. Nor can, or would, Mrs. Trumpington. Mrs. Trumpington, seated unwearied

on the verandah, dragon-eyed, novel- and crossword-bound, watches the incomings and outgoings of the Lake Hotel and does a hundred little sums in human frailty. She watches the full operatic curves and fearsome cosmetics of Miss Spatchcock, who, when she is not being suspicious of Dr. Gott, trails in and out of the telephone box, failing to get through to a sister who obstinately persists in remaining, not merely a Third, but in London. And, of course, she watches Dr. Gott, who is *not* a doctor of medicine, but comes from Oxford, writes on large pieces of paper all day long and makes a rumpus as soon as anyone opens the piano in the lounge. Gott! and not even Mrs. Fullalove knows what he is writing.

These people—except Dr. Gott, whose place and method of worship are unknown—all attend divine service over the way, where lie the bones of a poet who became ossified against revolution half a century before he died. What petitions do they offer there? Is it as simple and pitiable as "Lord, send us again what we have always been used to?" A fellow Third, more charitable than I, said of them "They mean well. The only trouble is they don't know the first thing about the works, and never will." I expect he is right. But am I right in thinking that it is because these people have never bothered to know anything about the works that the works are what they now are? Or is this just another of Mrs. Fullalove's unnecessary thoughts?

BARRINGTON GATES

HAPPY ENDING

CULTIVATED monkeys, Charles and I clung to the iron palings of the park. Froggy as well as monkey, he appreciated better than I did what we saw, but even to me the sight was an exciting one. For this was Ferney. So this was Ferney! This was the house that Voltaire built, those were the trees he planted, here his niece, Madame Denis, and others whom I read about afterwards in *La Vie Intime de Voltaire*, by Perey and Maugras, a very entertaining book—here Madame Denis, anyhow, lived, as shapeless as my sentence, but generally liked. With a heart like a warming pan and a figure like a dumpling, Madame Denis queened it here and reigned it, acted it and reacted it, danced it, reasoned it, unreasoned it, she drove in from Geneva to take possession covered with diamonds, she flounced away to Paris in a pet, she sneaked back. Voltaire was pleased when she arrived, thankful when she left, delighted when she returned. However, that is enough about Madame Denis for the moment. She is all in the book. We are clinging to the park railings.

Our feet slithered upon the uncomfortable parapet. We wished they were more prehensile. Craning our noses to the left, we could see the chapel. It was a small and simple structure, and it looked a trifle *moisi*. I cannot think of the right English equivalent of "moisi." "Mouldy" will not do. "Moisi" must stand. After all, we are in France. That always was the advantage of Ferney—it was just in France, and Voltaire, who preferred a pop-hole to a moat, could be over the border into Switzerland if he felt nervous, and back again if his nerves relaxed or reversed. The chapel ranked with the *loca senta situ* of which Virgil speaks, it had acquired the art of neglect with dignity, and had no wish to look trim. On its frontal was the famous inscription, "Deo erexit VOLTAIRE," and we saw with delight that the lettering of the Voltaire was twice the size of anything else. Proportion had been observed. Listen, while you look at this, to what they sang to him in the October of 1767, on the occasion of the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. They had begun the day by going to Mass, at two o'clock they had dined in state, a vast concourse of people, at six o'clock they attended a performance of two plays at his private theatre, and when this was over the actors and actresses, including Madame Denis, came forward in their brilliant dresses and grouped themselves around him and sang:

> L'Eglise, dans ce jour, fait à tous ses dévots
> Célébrer les vertus d'un pénitent austère.
> Si l'Eglise a ses saints, le Pinde a ses héros,
> Et nous fêtons ici le grand nom de Voltaire.

Then came fireworks, then an enormous supper, and then a ball at which Voltaire, who was over seventy, danced until midnight. Yes; the chapel has done well to observe proportion.

Straight ahead of us lay the chateau. It was quiet enough now, no singing, no guests, no work, the shutters were closed, the doors locked, and a man in an apron was sweeping up the leaves of 1939—not many of them, for our year was still at its June. Tourists were not admitted, and we were, we knew, almost the last of our sinewy tribe. Soon we should have to skedaddle for our tram. Lucky, happy we, to get this last peep at one of the symbols of European civilisation. Civilisation. Humanity. Enjoyment. That was what the agreeable white building said to us, that was what we carried away. It was not a large building and that has been part of the disaster. It was too small to cope with the modern world. A Ferney to-day would have to be enormous, with rolling staircases and microphones, if it was to function proportionately, and if it was enormous could it be Ferney? Even Voltaire felt that he saw too many people, and that the universe, though fortunately bounded by Russia, was upon too cumbrous a scale. He could just illuminate it, but only just, and he died without knowing that he was the last man who would ever perform such a feat, and that Goethe would die asking for more light. On the crest of a wave Ferney sparkled. The boundaries of the universe were to extend bewilderingly, the common people were to neglect the pursuit of agriculture, and, worst of all, the human make-up was to reveal deadnesses and depths which no acuteness could penetrate and no benignity heal.

His end was actually at Paris, and technically not happy. "Count no man happy until he is dead," saith the spirit of dullness. Happiness up to one's final collapse is the better criterion, and this Voltaire achieved. The pains and fears of his last moments (which most of us are doomed to share) altered the sum of his life but inappreciably. The death-bed or death-tumble or death-jumble, death-battle, death-rattle, death-splinter, death-squirt, appalling as it will be to each deserted and dying individual, is a transition, not an epitome. It has no retrospective force. It does not taint (except in a gleam of diseased memory) any of the triumphs that have gone before. Against that over-emphasis, that priestly organisation of the death-moment, Voltaire had himself protested, it was part of the infamous thing he had tried to crush. His real end was Ferney, and there we saw him that afternoon, as a house and trees.

Suppose he had come out as a person, and seen our snouts, what would he have done? He would probably have gone in again. But he would possibly have been very kind, and with a twentieth-century kindness, for he had an up-to-date heart. When his secretary's children pestered him with questions which the eighteenth century deemed foolish, he would answer the questions seriously, and put aside his work to do so. When a waiter was nice to him at Maintz, he insisted on stopping at the hotel kept by the waiter's father at Strasburg. It turned out to be a dreadful doss-house, but he would not leave it, although he was at the height of his fame, for the reason that he had made a friendly compact with the Maintz waiter. Humanity to him was not a platform gesture. He got down to brass tacks over it. Humanity meant saving the Calas family, or being respectful to his secretary's children, or to an unimportant little domestic. "Oh, but that is not the whole story," saith the spirit of dullness, looking up from its ledger; "he was also a capricious, shifty, cruel, litigious, indecent, panicky capitalist; I have it all down." And that exercise of a summing-up goes on, summing up an achievement which is a pattern, not a sum, and a pattern so intricate that the eye rests with the most conviction upon the spots of gold. Whether he would have greeted us is doubtful. Madame Denis, ever too sensitive to externals, would have recoiled with a *moue*, I fear. But they would certainly have caught sight of us. I want to make that plain, for it brings out the restricted character of the site. It was more of a packet than a park. We and the chateau and the man sweeping leaves and the chapel and the porter's lodge were all bunched up together among residential greenery. There was nothing august or wide-sweeping in the demesne, though two hundred years ago, before the trees grew up, there must have been views of the lake. Oddly enough, I catch a parallel with Max Gate as I try to reconstruct. A nest made by a celebrated literary man, going a little untidy. But whereas Hardy belonged to the soil, the soil belonged to Voltaire, and one has not, when visiting Ferney, any poignant sense of locality. Here is merely a place which he happened to buy and make his own, after Cirey and Potsdam and Les Délices had failed, and it is appropriate that he should have failed to die in it, and that his corpse should have been bandied about in revolutions, and perhaps got mixed up with Rousseau's.

But one cannot cling for ever to an alien pale, or peep for ever at a scene with which curiosity and hope are one's only links. Monkeys must let go. "I am content to have seen Ferney," remarked Charles, as he dusted his paws. I popped the object into my pouch for future use. One never knows, and I had no idea how precious it would become to me in a year's time, nor how I should take it out, and discover that it had turned faintly radio-active. We caught the tram back to Geneva all right, crossed the almost unguarded frontier, and then we departed to our respective cages, which were closed and locked not long after we entered them.

E. M. FORSTER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Britain's R.A.F.," March of Time
"Flight Angels," at Warner's
"Rangers of Fortune" and "The Dentist," at the Plaza

With No. 6 in its sixth year the March of Time reaches the R.A.F. Except for a moment or two near the beginning when the announcer's tones ring with too rich a metal, this is one of their very best productions. (The "dramatic" voice, by the way, a relic of the days when it was paradoxical to find drama in realities, might well be dropped.) For three months the March of Time cameramen were busy on R.A.F. stations in Britain, with defence units, with bomber and fighter squadrons, and even the large table at the Air Ministry itself where policies are decided has come under the lens. Needless to say, they have made the most of their material and of the co-operation offered by the authorities. In a very few minutes we are given a bird's-eye view of the emergence of the R.A.F. from its position at the outbreak of war as "junior Service" to the spectacular place it holds in world events to-day. This introduction, as it were, to present details of offence and defence has been cunningly wedged in between the opening shots of an air raid and the main body of the film, which sweeps us into aircraft factories, control rooms, listening posts, a London shelter, cockpits over the North Sea and over railway sidings in Germany, training centres in Canada, and into the thick of an air battle at Dover. I have rarely seen so many facts so briefly and lucidly presented; it is almost as awe-inspiring, from the technical point of view, as a talk by Mr. Raymond Gram Swing. And the facts here are always exciting and sometimes take in scenes of unsurpassable beauty. The bomber is loaded tenderly with bombs of terrifying size drawn across the airfield on a train of trucks; the planes take off and we see them hanging imperturbably in order above a cloud-floor; another shot of the formation lower down, dropping their bombs, which descend lazily in a cluster and then disappear for an instant before the explosion. It has taken only a few seconds in all: a suspended moment in which one holds one's breath while the clockwork of destruction and the insistent beauty of the surroundings impress simultaneously. Many such scenes—of balloon barrage or flying squadrons, of a North Sea below us wrinkled like lizard skin round a lighthouse, of cloudscapes with the texture of glaciers—have been caught on the wing. I have written at more length about *Britain's R.A.F.* than I did a week or so ago about *London Can Take It*, not because it is a better film—the work of the G.P.O. Unit can stand up to any comparison—but because the English film was being shown in nearly every cinema while the *March of Time* has still unaccountably to be sought out.

The other new films are few and below par. *Flight Angels* tries to make a story out of the relations between pilots and stewardesses working on a civil air line. Not nearly enough use has been made either of the scenery or of a life of which most of us know nothing. It contains one or two feminine idiocies in the best Warner tradition, and the thrill of a trial flight in which the hero dives vertically down the screen from the stratosphere to within 2,000 feet of land before he can pull out.

Rangers of Fortune is a competent and amusing film of the old school about cowboy musketeers. The new feature is a new child actress. Miss Brewer, aged eleven, is snub-nosed, young-old and pig-tailed, and shows talent and charm. The others—Fred McMurray, Gilbert Roland, Albert Dibber and Patricia Morison—all act well. I recommend the Plaza, however, more for its second feature: an eight-year-old comic with W. C. Fields. *The Dentist* lasts about half-an-hour and I found it very funny indeed. How many early Fields of this type are there about? Now, if ever, is the time to revive them.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

"Diversion" at Wyndham's Theatre

The first item in this hodge-podge of intimate revue, a song about a "Nice, rice shape," suggests the criticism of the whole. *Diversion* is pervaded with the characteristic vices of bad English cooking—wateriness, lack both of an individual flavour and of inspiration and an addiction to *réchauffés*. But toad-in-the-hole, even when served with the accomplishment of Mr. George Benson or Miss Dorothy Dickson, loses its lightness after the fifth re-heat. The fault does not lie with the ingredients. There is plenty of cream (Miss Edith Evans), fresh butter (Miss Joyce Grenfell) and a positively Mrs. Beeton ration of new-laid eggs (Miss Dorothy Dickson, Miss Sterndale Bennett, Miss Irene Eisinger, Walter Crisham and a Players' Theatre contingent). But the mixture never mixes: the pastry never rises: the gas pressure remains at its lowest. That said, one may pick out certain individual performances. There was the delightfully understated socialite canteen worker of Miss Joyce Grenfell; the cruel parody of the Upper Class Berkeley Square Nightingale by Miss Dorothy Dickson; Vida Hope's Nude on the Dole; Miss Eisinger's charmingly wasted voice. And there were Victoriana by Elsie French, John Mott and Peter Ustinov. But these can be seen any evening to better advantage in their own setting at the new Players' Theatre in Albemarle Street, with a night's comfortable shelter thrown in. Such money as was spent on this production might have been better employed; *Diversion* will do little to advertise the courage of the London Theatre in face of its very real difficulties.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, November 2nd—
Ellen Wilkinson: "Social Justice," Fabian Soc. Lecture, Central Hall, 2.15.
Orchestral Concert of Russian and Soviet Music. The London Philharmonic Orchestra with May Blyth and Thomas Matthews, Queen's Hall, 2.30.

SUNDAY, November 3rd—
Prof. G. W. Keeton: "The Congress of Vienna and After," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, November 4th—
Fabian Society International Affairs Group Snack Lunch, Dorothy Macardle: "Are There Two Irelands?" 12 Gt. Newport Street, 1.

WEDNESDAY, November 6th—
M. André Labarthe: "Relation entre la Science et la Technique en France," Institut Français, 3. And on November 13th.

Correspondence

HEALTH IN SHELTERS

SIR,—We wish to emphasise the point made in last week's Comments about the delay in making the London shelters habitable for the winter. Something is being done in the large East End shelter, described recently in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, but, out of hundreds in the East End, this is only one, which happened to gain particular notoriety. Even there no kitchen is yet established, and the canteen can cater for only a few of the people. Bunks are there, but tickets have not been allocated by any particular method, and many people who go there regularly will be turned away if they arrive late. Also, it is taking too long to install water closets, which the Army could do rapidly.

In many other shelters immediate changes are necessary. We indicate a few, the addresses of which are enclosed separately.

It is useless to improve the trench shelters unless they can be made dry, and it is impossible to give them medical aid posts or canteens. Six hundred people, including many children, sleep in Shelter A under a recreation ground. The water oozes through the walls and, when it rains, pours through the entrance. Water is lying on the floor every morning, and one night, after heavy rainfall, the fire brigade had to be called at 2 a.m. to pump out the water.

In a similar shelter (B) over a thousand people sleep, and here also are many children. Two workmen, patching the walls from which water was steadily dripping, admitted that their work was fruitless, as the water only oozed through elsewhere. Two hundred people sleep in Shelter C in the garden of an East End settlement. Here the surface water is covered by duck-boards, but the air is stale and damp. The huge network of shelters (D) under an East End park would be as bad as other trenches had not a wealthy philanthropist paid a contractor to patch up the dampest places.

In some shelters there is still no proper sanitation. Shelter E, where four hundred people sleep, has no lavatories except an outside drain, surrounded by canvas, and used by both sexes and by children. In this shelter were found 130 children under 14, 50 being under five. Shelter F, with over seven hundred people in badly crowded conditions, has only four lavatories, from which the overflow runs back into the shelter. The great majority of the other deep shelters are still without medical aid posts or visits from doctors.

Of the tube shelters, Shelter G holds 500 persons, but its lavatory accommodation is wholly inadequate; aged and infirm people have to sleep on the staircases; and large profits are being made at a private caterer's canteen. At Shelter H there are two thousand shelterers, but the air current is very poor. Some of the 24 chemical closets overflow on to the ground where men are sleeping. There is a first aid post, but the station master will not allow a canteen to be set up.

At Shelter J queueing begins at 9.30 a.m., and by 9 p.m. there are 1,500 people below, and 2,000 in the corridors. The congestion is serious and the air close. Shelter K contains 2,200 people by 8 p.m. The closets are inadequate in numbers and privacy; the air is stale; and there is grave danger of flooding, the precautions against which have only made the exits less accessible.

These facts show that there is no justification for supposing that the danger of epidemics in the shelters in winter has been arrested. The most urgent need is that all the children should be evacuated immediately.

EAST END WORKERS

[We refer to this letter in our Comments.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

BRITAIN, GREECE AND SYRIA

SIR,—So the Italians have invaded Greece this morning!

A civilian may have military day-dreams. When the Germans invaded Norway up to Narvik, I felt that the enemy had at last delivered himself. "You wait," I said, "to-morrow you will see that Gamelin is marching into Lombardy, Weygand into Libya, while the British and French navies will present a three-hour ultimatum to Italy's fleet!" Not for a moment did I imagine that a Government which included Mr. Churchill would do exactly what the Germans wanted—send badly improvised expeditions into the Arctic. Of what use was Narvik to anybody, anyway?

So now—the Greek decoy!

Let us look at the largest strategic picture, which is always in the Nazi mind. It is hardly realised how, since the defeat of the Luftwaffe's attack by a few thousand British airmen, the Nazis have already lost the initiative. How can they now stop the British bomber force—more modern and scientific than their own? Next spring, owing to growing British-American air strength, is the closing date for a last air-and-sea invasion attempt. Before then, therefore, the Nazis must beat through the blockade. Their two vital aims are to capture the Middle Eastern oilfields and the Suez Canal, giving access to Italian East Africa—*intact*. Our aim is to prevent this. This means that if Britain held nothing but Gibraltar, Palestine and Aden for six months,

the defensive war would be won. If, in addition, British and allied forces also held some part of Turkey from which to bomb Rumania's oil wells, the situation would be even more favourable.

It follows, that as the Italians attack Greece, Britain has an obvious answer. Not an expeditionary landing in Greece—for which the Germans in the Balkans are only waiting. The best aid to Greece is to chase the Italian navy from the sea. If we could also hold Crete and the Dodecanese, it would be invaluable. But the obvious answer is that as the Axis concentrates on Greece, our main forces walk into Syria—now. If we do this, the unexpected, all their strategy is astray!

Because in the last resort all depends on what Turkey, the largest and strongest power in the Middle East, will do. And this depends on Britain. Not on Soviet Russia, as is so often stated. The "proletarian" Stalin-Hitler Pact was followed not only by Stalin's Finnish fiasco, but by the "reactionary" Laval-Hitler Pact, which allowed the Nazis to amble into Rumania, and threw Russia back on to the defensive. (How Stalin and Laval, who signed the Franco-Soviet Pact in 1935, must have loved double-crossing each other.) That the Nazis should have undertaken the Balkan adventure at all shows their knowledge that Soviet Russia will do nothing.

What would the Turks fight for? Their national revolution. This should be fully understood. Feudal Rumania or Hungary can be made larger or smaller Nazi satellites, and nothing is really changed. But were Turkey to fall once more under German control and exploitation, this would be death not only to the young Turkish Republic, but to the whole vision of Ataturk's national rising. Yet the Turks alone cannot perform the impossible. To resist, as they wish to, they must know that the forces of the British Empire, as capable of swift, bold and decisive action as the Nazis, are ready at their back.

Instead of this, we have so far suffered Syria as a yawning vacuum and danger-spot. Any day, guns which could have commanded Haifa Port could have appeared on Syria's southernmost headland of Ras end Nakura. Most British-Turkish trade now passes along the newly complete Istanbul-Bagdad line. But at Aleppo, where this line crosses Syria, an Italian Commission is waiting to interrupt traffic. Plainly this situation is untenable. The present Greek crisis gives the chance to liquidate it in a single swift action. The Syrian Arabs are half in revolt; French strength is disintegrating. How could the quick occupation be achieved? Call up 20,000 Jewish auxiliaries at once for the defence of Palestine, releasing the same number of British troops; the Navy appears in force off Beyrut and Tripoli; the Turks press from the North, while the Arabs proclaim a Syrian Republic. Of the French troops, the Foreign Legion contains a large number of anti-Nazi refugees; colonial troops like the Sengalese showed at Sedan that they are no material for modern tank-and-plane war. It is doubtful for how many days or hours, if at all, French troops in an unsympathetic country would show fight, if a chance of repatriation were held out to them. French colonial rule in Syria has always been unfortunate. And an excellent "*political cement*" for this occupation offers itself. On November 13th, 1936, Jamal Mardam Bey, the Syrian Premier, signed a Franco-Syrian Treaty with the French Government of Léon Blum, whereby Syria and the Lebanon were to become autonomous republics within three years—that is, last autumn.

Owing to the opposition of French reactionary circles led by M. Laval and General Weygand, who feared an extension of British influence, the Treaty was never ratified. But if Britain were now to announce her recognition of this Franco-Syrian Treaty and of Syrian Arab aspirations, French democratic and progressive opinion could not oppose this step, of which its own leaders had approved.

Mussolini's crude attack on Greece can give Britain the chance to rally the whole Middle East into a single defence front, completely fortifying Turkey's back door. But the chance must be boldly seized. It will not return. At least, so it seems on this first day of Italy's invasion.

"MIDDLE-EAST"

TREATMENT OF C.O.s

SIR,—There was applause in the House of Commons when, in reply to Mr. Benson, Sir Edward Grigg said he would require to be satisfied of the facts before issuing to Commanding Officers a letter similar to the one sent out in 1916 forbidding the brutal and illegal treatment of conscientious objectors. We join with members of the House of Commons in applauding the expressed intention of the War Office to sift to the bottom the mass of allegations of brutality to at least twenty men now being made against officers and non-commissioned officers of a unit of the A.M.P.C. in Liverpool.

What are the allegations? Here are sample statements:

(*a*) (From a Manchester University graduate.) Dingle is a concentration camp for objectors. One is put in solitary confinement on bread and water, forced to do drills, beaten up, wakened at intervals throughout the night for further beatings until one gives in. If one asks to see the C.O. one sees him and is told that he will not remand one to court-martial and the treatment has his full approval. If one is so bad that one has to go to hospital, the official description of the case is "air-raid casualty." Some people managed to stick it for a fortnight. . . . Just hanging on doesn't work, for finally one is so weak that one can resist no longer.

(*b*) He was then taken round a corner of a building and when he reappeared his nose was bleeding. He was taken into a cell below the Commanding Officer's room. The C.O. must have known about it. On Monday at 12 o'clock he was brought before the C.O., but he was too weak to stand up and was supported by soldiers. B., who was also there, heard the Colonel say that A. was to be taken to hospital.

(*c*) We were taken back to the Guard Room, being struck on the head at every pace, and put in solitary confinement with bread and water. None of the cells had any light. We were roused three times during the night. [The following night] at midnight, at 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. we were paraded round the playground, E. in bare feet and underclothes (or night-shirt), the rest in shirt-sleeves. . . . They were taken out to drill with a party of men with rifles, who continually butted them in the back and stomach with the rifles, and kicked them on the legs and struck them on the face as they marched. This lasted either twenty minutes or an hour, they could not remember clearly. None of them ever had a chance of asking for a court-martial. (When D. was tried he said he wanted to be tried by court-martial, but was told to shut up, etc., and hustled out of the room.)

(*d*) Wednesday. Three men came down to cut my hair and I felt so weak and depressed that I did not have enough strength to resist at all. The barber tried very hard to leave a little on the top, but the Sergeant got his own way eventually and I was shaved very clean.

(*e*) (Thursday.) There were about ten N.C.O.s and they kept us running round and round the hut. . . . All the time they were kicking us as we ran. H. collapsed and said he would give in, but they dipped his head in a bucket of water and he was pushed back into the line.

(*f*) Arrived Thursday, September 24th. . . . I had been sentenced in Glasgow to one year's imprisonment commuted to three months for refusing to don the uniform at Great Yarmouth. About midnight I was roused and taken out in my underclothing and with bare feet and marched round the yard, being beaten and kicked as we went along. I was again roused at 2 a.m. and 4 a.m., marched round with others and then left until 6 a.m. the following morning. I was taken to a solitary cell in darkness, where I was given bread and water and one blanket.

Several men state that they continually made complaints both as to their general treatment and particularly to the beating-up, but nothing at all was done. They were told it was the order of the C.O.

The author of statement (*c*) above writes also of a later occasion:

Some eleven of us . . . were lined up and told to mark time, we refused, but they kicked our ankles and the officer whacked a few of us with his baton. We were hit, punched, kicked and whacked again and again by each N.C.O. as we passed them; if we went down we were picked up and pushed on; if we were too bad water was thrown over our heads. Noses were bleeding. B. J. received two very black eyes, we all had blows on our jaws, bruises on the posterior and ankles. We were all finished off one by one, with a blow below the belt, then winded and almost unconscious, an N.C.O. held us against the wall and the officer demanded we gave in.

On Friday morning we were aroused at 5.30, about 9 o'clock put in a van and taken to Lime Street, put on a train and taken to Cardiff together with sixteen other N.C. men. . . . The reason for getting rid of us so suddenly was, I believe, that some War Office officials were expected.

It is clear that any enquiry will be valueless unless it takes evidence from the men directly concerned. Why, then, were the twenty-seven men mentioned above removed from the camp? Have they been interviewed? Otherwise, how does Sir Edward Grigg propose to satisfy himself about the facts?

SIDNEY SPENCER,
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Merseyside Advisory Committee for Pacifists
G. A. SUTHERLAND,
Chairman,
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THE CATHOLIC-LATIN MYTH

SIR,—I am indebted to Miss Barbara Ward for writing—and to you, Sir, for publishing—her friendly commentary on my article with the above title. Miss Ward and I are at one, I think, in desiring what she calls a reconditioning of the free State, and she is right in surmising that I was using the word "democracy" as a convenient shorthand term—without, certainly, the idea of any particular political furniture. As for what she has to say about the use of the Catholic-Latin myth in the context of the Nazi technique of disintegration, I entirely agree. But the notion was abroad in France and in Italy, I would remind her, long before Hitler came into prominence, and what distresses me about this and other manifestations of Catholic dialectics is precisely their undermining of societies blessed with an inherent social cohesion less than our own. Just because Catholic thinkers have for generations been sapping at the foundations of liberalism, in one nation after another on the Continent the way has been paved for Fascism, and Miss Ward must not be surprised, therefore, if, judging by effects, the ordinary progressive has a tendency to regard "Catholic" and "Fascist" as synonymous.

May I reply to Mr. Beales, who charges me with misreading the attitude of the Catholic press to Pétain's France by repeating that I was only recording a general impression from such Catholic papers as had come my way? I have now gone carefully through the file of the *Catholic Herald* since the end of June and I must say that that impression is confirmed. Thus in its leading article on July 12th (on "A Latin Catholic *Bloc*") the editor writes:

> "We shall not deny that we believe the true prosperity and welfare of our country to be linked up with the influences making for this Catholic *bloc* rather than with America, Russia and Prussia [*sic*], but we must recognise the fact that this is not the prevalent view here, especially in political and commercial circles."

And he goes on to rebuke those who continue to indulge in recriminations against our old Ally and to dub the Pétain administration as treacherous, Fascist, reactionary. If that isn't an attitude of faith, hope and charity towards the present unworthy leaders of France I don't know what it is! Let me add that I should have made an exception in the case of *The Tablet*, which has consistently pointed out that, as a footstool of the Nazis, the new régime in France could not possibly live up to any of its professions of Catholic regeneration.

Manchester. W. HORSFALL CARTER

SIR,—Among all the leaders and the loyalties which recently have cringed and wilted, none, according to the German News Agency, has capitulated more thoroughly to the New Order in Europe than the Vatican. It would be interesting to know how far the following facts, announced by this Agency, are true.

In the early days of September of this year, 45 German Catholic bishops met in the palace of the prince-bishops at Fulda on the directions of the Pope. They agreed in conclave that "the Catholic Church in Germany is indebted to German troops for the victorious advance and defence of the German homeland. Without the successful warding off of enemy invasion by German armed forces, German Catholics could not have pursued so

undisturbed and quietly their Church work and ministerial offices."

It is further alleged that the result of the conference was a pastoral letter glorifying Adolf Hitler and German military feats, which will be read from every German Catholic pulpit "when Hitler wins the war."

If this report is exact, it will confirm the almost universal impression that the Vatican always seeks, and always finds, a *modus vivendi* with every victorious power except Soviet Russia. One remembers how, in an equally abject gesture towards the Italian partner of the Axis, the Vatican suppressed its semi-official organ, *Osservatore Romano*, that impartially published the British war communiqués, and replaced it by a Jesuit-owned paper, *Corriere Vaticano*, which at a time when the Christian ethic is fighting for its life, plays for safety by featuring "literary and artistic subjects" (its own words).

ODETTE KEUN

A PLAN TO AVOID INFLATION

SIR,—Air raids and the threat of invasion have temporarily driven bread-and-butter problems into the background. To some, "inflation" may sound like the cry of disgruntled economists whose voices have for months been mercifully silent. The difficulties of our situation are indeed real and not financial—problems of raw material imports, heavy demands on labour, smashed houses and factories, and disorganised transport—but nevertheless these may be made a thousand times worse if prices are uncontrollably rising; such a rise, if it comes, will exacerbate every dormant social conflict, throwing into the affairs of every family in the country a devastating bombshell of anxiety and uncertainty.

Consider the problem. Supplies of goods to satisfy civilian demand have been limited; official policy has had some success in this direction. But the money incomes available for purchasing that limited supply of goods have *not* been successfully restricted, either by taxation or loans, voluntary or compulsory. Exchequer issues for the Supply Services were over £20 millions a *week* higher in the quarter to the end of September than for the previous quarter (and the quarter before that); this money is not all immediately spent, and some of it is spent abroad, but it is clear that Government departments cannot postpone indefinitely spending their money in this country, thus swelling the money incomes of the recipients of this expenditure.

Sooner or later, therefore, with restricted supplies and larger money incomes, there must be either huge rises in prices *or* shortages of commodities in shops *or* widely extended rationing. Inroads into stocks, accelerated by pre-Purchase Tax buying, have postponed the day of reckoning, but fairly soon this expedient must cease to have effect, and the choice must be made.

The practical alternatives are really only two; *violent* price-rises and *severe* shop-shortages, or *mild* price-rises and systematic rationing.

Mr. Keynes, in his recent broadcast, persisted in the view that "no better remedy than my own has been proposed by anyone else." Mr. Keynes' scheme was always open to the objection that the forced saving from current income imposed upon the richer classes could always be avoided by dis-saving. Since the plan was published an alternative scheme of general rationing has been suggested by Mr. Kalecki, in the Bulletin of the Oxford Institute of Statistics, which overcomes this difficulty. His device is the simple one of restricting the total expenditure permitted to each individual. He would do this by making all purchases in shops (with certain exceptions such as medicines, newspapers and second-hand goods) permissible only if accompanied by surrender of a ration coupon. Each individual would be entitled to a ration book permitting him to spend in shops only a certain fixed amount of his current income (say £60 per annum for an adult person), the fixed amount being very much below what the richer middle-class individually spend on themselves. The scheme is *not* extended to rent and services which do not represent the use of materials. Buildings and the labour of persons rendering services may both if necessary be requisitioned by the Government, and it is not necessary meanwhile to restrict expenditure on them, although rent restriction may be desirable for reasons of social justice.

Safeguards have been introduced into the scheme by Mr. Kalecki to prevent the sale of coupons by those not using them to richer persons; the principal safeguard is that a maximum *percentage* of income to be spent in shops might be fixed as well as an absolute maximum. This would prevent the possibility of wage-earners drawing many more coupons than they actually needed for shop-purchases out of their limited incomes, in order to sell them to richer people.

This scheme, or some variant of it, deserves serious consideration. Financial remedies alone are not likely to succeed in averting inflation. Despite Sir Kingsley Wood's recent speech it is neither the form nor the size of national savings that is the criterion of whether inflation is developing or not. Savings may be astronomical when incomes are astronomical. What matters is to secure *before a large part of incomes gets spent* that expenditure is going to be cut down.

The economic internal danger is as grave as the danger from the air; so far it cannot, unhappily, be said that the net effect of our series of budgets, of Stamp Committees and Catto Committees, of our Ministers without Portfolio and with Portfolio, has yet been other than to produce a deep ostrich-like burrow in the sand.

IAN BOWEN

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Oxford.

WHY NOT ?

SIR,—It is continually said—I believe with truth—by everyone everywhere in the country, that we are fighting the war for liberty and democracy, not only in Britain but all over the world. Some people, with whom I agree, add the corollary that we ought to fight the war as a revolutionary war, and by our acts, beyond the mere resistance to Hitler, his armies, his airplanes and bombs, show that we mean business when we speak of democracy and liberty. But very few ever put forward definite proposals for such acts.

There is one which we might immediately venture upon and which would have an immense effect upon world opinion and, I believe, upon the whole war. It is a "revolutionary" act and will therefore seem dangerous and possibly "impossible" to many people. But surely it is time for the democracies to take one leaf out of the Nazi book and see that dangerous and impossible (democratic) acts are the strongest weapons against Hitler and Mussolini, whose great strength hitherto has consisted in their ability to venture upon dangerous and impossible anti-democratic acts.

The proposal concerns India. No one in this country can feel happy about the situation in that semi-continent. The immense majority of people here are anxious to give India liberty and self-government; the vast majority of Indians appear to be wholly upon the side of Britain in its struggle against Fascism. Yet the efforts to satisfy India's demand for the democratic right of self-government have drifted into a deadlock. The deadlock is not entirely our fault, because the problem of how to pass in India from the present régime to self-government is a really difficult one. My proposal is that Mr. Gandhi should be made Viceroy and that he should be invited to come to London before taking up his office to consult with the Government here on the steps to be taken both to implement our pledges and prosecute the war. Many will at first sight regard this as fantastic, but all revolutionary and effective historical acts appear at first sight fantastic. Mr. Gandhi is probably the one man who could overcome the enormous difficulties in the way of a peaceful transition to self-government in India and he would not flinch from the responsibilities not only to Congress, but to those who are afraid of Congress. His political acts are themselves so often fantastic because they are revolutionary, so that the proposal should appeal, not only to his sense of duty, but to his sense of political humour and appropriateness.

If the offer were made and accepted, it might well be the first step towards what so many people are speaking about—a different and a better world.

Rodmell. LEONARD WOOLF

THE NEXT GENERATION

SIR,—Your article, "The Next Generation," seems to imply that Family Allowances alone will solve the problem of malnutrition in children. I cannot agree with this. Although an increase in wages in some form is, of course, vital to the lower-paid workers, it is lack of education in the mother that is the chief cause of the trouble. I have recently had billeted with me a mother and baby of 5 months. Her husband earns over £4 a week. In one day the baby was given macaroni cheese, cheap currant cake and a drink of its mother's strong tea. The child was under the care of the district nurse at the time, but was said not to like the infant food she had recommended. The mother came of a "superior" family and had been to a secondary school.

This is only one of many instances of complete lack of education for their job that I have met with among London and country mothers. Not one in ten of the mothers in this village use the pint of cheap milk exclusively for their baby. At about 6 months they start drinking milk "same as father."

Sussex. BILLETING OFFICER

THE PROBLEM OF THE HOMELESS

SIR,—I have followed with interest your efforts to arouse the Government to a sense of its responsibilities towards the bombed homeless.

In this connection two cases which have recently come to my notice would seem to suggest that there is room for considerable improvement in the matter of Local Authorities deciding whether or not a house which has been bombed is habitable. One of these cases was that of a flat attached to a shop which has been destroyed. The premises are without water, without doors, without bath and without lavatory but have been declared "habitable" by the Local Authority. The position is the more serious as the tenant has had her little business destroyed but is unable to seek fresh premises from which to carry on as long as she is liable for the rent of the bombed shop.

The second was that of a family whose house had been seriously damaged but who had to remain in possession because the Local Authority (not the same Authority as in the preceeding case) had declared it "habitable." And yet, if the householder required water for any purpose it had to be turned on at the main, during which time it seeped through the walls and ceilings.

The writer spends most of his time in some of the areas which have been most heavily attacked and his impression is that the people in these districts will stand up to a considerable amount of such treatment provided that proper provision is made for them. But to condemn people to remain in possession of premises which are everything except structurally unsafe will do more to lower morale than any amount of destruction by air-attack.

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WHAT TO DO WITH INTERNEES

SIR,—The constant plea for release of refugees from internment does not deal with the real problem. The desire of most is to be a part of a creative society at a time when goods are required and to be saved from idleness, boredom and dependence. Release does not attempt a solution of that problem, and constantly ejects men and women from internment to another form of idleness, boredom and dependence.

The time has come to turn Huyton, or some other centre, into a refugee productive society, run by refugees on their own planning and initiative, producing such things as are required by the Government for its multitudinous wants on a no-profit and no-loss basis, enabling them to build up their own economy and society in family groups.

The military guards could be removed and the police could provide all the necessary control if Category "A" refugees were retained in the internment camps.

A great variety of talent remains unutilised at a time when every talent should be used. Thousands of guards are wasted in guarding those needing no guards. The qualifications of many refugees are likely to remain unused whether released or interned, but in a productive society of their own many qualifications can be used for the consolidation of our economy. Engineers, chemists, architects, technicians of every kind, women with varied gifts, youths capable of strenuous work, teachers for the children, doctors, dentists and preachers for the community formed would be all of real value.

This solution would call for a minimum of oversight and control, freedom could be granted to the refugees concerned to work out their own salvation in service to one another and to the land of their adoption. HAROLD WATTS

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Birmingham, 30.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ONE hesitates, since Freud, to admit to a strong personal feeling for church steeples, and yet who does not respond to the ring and vividness of that phrase which occurs again and again in George Fox's *Journal*, a phrase which catches the inner wondering music of the mind:

> As I was walking in a close with several Friends, I lifted up my head and espied three steeple-house spires and they struck at my life.

They do still strike at our lives, though with the stab of reminiscence rather than of faith, when we see them rising over the fields and elms of the English countryside. In the towns—and Fox on this occasion was speaking of "the bloody city of Lichfield"—the steeple commands the skyline no longer. Those words of Fox, more than any others of his, take us back to the 17th century. A hundred years later, the steeple must still have denominated the towns to the arriving traveller, as it continues to-day to pick out our villages, but did the steeple "strike at" the 18th-century traveller's "life"? That is very doubtful. The decisiveness, the militance, the poignancy had gone out of English religious fervour; the revivalism of Wesley, a fruit of personal conflict, side-tracked a revolution where the "prophesyings" of the Puritans made one. That is, perhaps, too great a simplification; Fox himself was a poor short-term revolutionary when one compares him with Cromwell's sectarian soldiers; the mysticism of the Quakers provided, *in their own time*, an alternative to the revolution. But it was a long-i term and alternative revolution, such as we see in the gospels of non-resistance to violence by force, pacifism, non-attachment, etc., etc., to-day. Continue that quotation from the *Journal* and one cannot doubt a revolutionary emotion that is more dynamic than the feeling of Winstanley's peasant Communists who, having taken the land, were content to keep the clergy and the gentry off by singing a song about "conquering them with love."

> I asked them, [Fox goes on] what place that was and they said, Lichfield. Immediately the word of the Lord came to me that thither I must go . . . I stepped away, and went by my eye over hedge and ditch till I came within a mile of Lichfield, where in a great field there were shepherds keeping their sheep. I was commanded of the Lord to untie my shoes and put them off.

And then, his bare feet burning like fire on the winter fields, he walked into the town where

> the word of the Lord came to me again to cry, "Woe unto the bloody city of Lichfield!" So I went up and down the streets, crying with a loud voice, "Woe to the bloody city of Lichfield!" And no one laid hands on me; but as I went thus crying through the streets, there seemed to me to be a channel of blood running down the streets, and the market place appeared like a pool of blood.

That is authentic and so is the characteristic English reaction, "Alack George," the inhabitants said, "Where are thy shoes?" The woe could take care of itself; what bothered the respectable, practical souls of Lichfield was the condition of George Fox's feet.

There is the attraction of Fox's *Journal* in a few lines. His writing blends the personal fanatic cry of the visionary with the words o the homely. The huge Leicestershire shepherd with his loud voice, his curling hair, which a disapproving Puritan lady in Wales tried to snip off with her scissors, his horn of snuff and his leathern suit, has his feet on the soil, on the roads of the 17th-century English wilderness and in the streets of the muddy towns. He has "great openings," he "sees" this and that, the imps and devils are chained to his foot, the "inner light" burns vividly in him and is easily distinguished from the false light of other peoples' "vain imaginings," but he also knows the price of oats, and how to obstruct magistrates. Unlike Bunyan's Christian traveller, Fox is a real traveller, knowing the inns, the houses of friends, the jails. The journey is earthly and not allegorical. Fox was worn out on the Welsh hills, mired on the Yorkshire roads and saw the sea from the edge of Lancashire. From the age of twenty he was wandering all over England, from steeple to steeple, meeting the soldiers on the way to the Battle of Worcester, being beaten by the mobs, taken up by the sheriffs, arguing the Scriptures with Papists, Brownites, Ranters, "rude jangling Baptists," and the "hireling priests." The only danger he feared was the danger of remaining in one place where long contact with people would blunt the edge of conscience and dull his ear for the word of the Lord. A man of little education, he is no great writer; his jog-trot Puritan prose ambles like his horse and cannot be compared with Bunyan's. But his own obstinate, innocent, alarming character bursts through the repetitions, and the rest of his writing is made up of Biblical echoes, the sound of Hebraic incantation common to evangelical writing but, in his time, not yet mechanised and turned into cant.

The virtues and vices of Quakerism seem to be rooted in a startling mildness and literalness of mind. The other sects were in ecstasies and terror about the future, they bore on their shoulders a back-breaking load of hope, of bliss and fears of damnation. The Quakers, practical children of the Quietists and the non-attached, adissolved the coagulation of dogma and doctrine nd experienced their heavens and their hells n the present moment. They were in Abraham's bosom now. One sees the other Puritans fighting their way towards God as if towards an enemy; the Quakers purified themselves and waited for God to speak like a friend in their hearts. Unoppressed by dogma, unfettered by a programme, they could be practical.

But Fox, the founder, belongs to the dynamic age of Quakerism. One sees the familiar, human dilemma. Fox approached the inner light by throwing many into the outer darkness. "Drowned." "Had a miserable end"—how often one meets this comment on the fate of those who opposed him. It is not said gloatingly, but with the fervour of fanaticism for its own logic. If a miraculous healing was impermanent the patient had, of course, "disobeyed the Lord." A butcher put his tongue out at Fox; the tongue swelled up and would not go back. Those who "see" the truth are "tender" or "very tender"; those who reject it are "rude" or "light, chaffy men." Accused of witchcraft himself (for, when beaten, he did not bleed, or bled very little—the lack of blood in this huge frame is a curious physical characteristic) he is expert at discerning witchcraft in others. He had one unhappy woman, "with an unclean spirit," turned out of a meeting before he would speak. (Fox was a great showman.) A pistol is fired point blank at him; naturally it does not go off. And then there is the row about refusing to take the oath. One must sympathise with the revolutionary authorities when faced by revolutionaries even more revolutionary than themselves. For Fox and his fellow-Quietists, the apostles of non-violence might turn the other cheek to physical violence, but they provoked riots with their tongues. They marched into the steeple houses crying "Peace be unto you" and in the next breath were denouncing the preacher as a "hireling." They preached him down in his own church, and then became indignant when the police or the soldiers had to come in to restore order. And even more indignant when asked to swear the oath of allegiance. Mysticism, it has been said, has always been recognised as a distintegrating force—the last thing successful revolutionaries can dispense with are the symbols of loyalty.

When the Quakers refused to raise their hats in the street, or in the Courts, they were part of that anti-doffing movement to which the Puritans in general subscribed as a protest against the long, feathery and sweeping bows of the Cavaliers. Lilbourne, when brought before the Council of State, had refused to remove his hat to people who had "no more legal authority than myself." It took the Quakers with their obstinacy, their literalness of mind and their simple way of finding a superior moral justification in the Scriptures, to appeal beyond the Courts to God. One cannot decide whether they are vexatious or remarkable in that wonderful judicial comedy which George Fox provoked at Launceston. Fox writes with pain, but surely with a sly peasant smile of private triumph:

> When we were brought into the Court, we stood a pretty while with our hats on, and all was quiet; and I was moved to say, "Peace be amongst you!" Judge Glynne, a Welshman, the Chief Justice of England, said to the jailer, "What be these you have brought here into the Court?" "Prisoners, my lord," said he. "Why do you not put off your hats?" said the judge to us; we said nothing. "Put off your hats," said the judge again. Still we said nothing. Then said the judge, "The Court commands you to put off your hats." Then I spoke and said, "Where did ever any magistrate, king or judge from Moses to Daniel, command any to put off their hats, when they came before them in their Courts, either amongst the Jews, the people of God, or among the heathen? And if the law of England doth command any such thing, shew me that law either written or printed." Then the judge grew angry and said, "I do not carry my lawbooks on my back. . . Take him away, prevaricator. I'll ferk him."
>
> Presently the judge cooled down and called the prisoners back:
>
> "Come," said he, "where had they hats from Moses to Daniel? Come, answer me. I have you fast now." But no one had George Fox fast on a matter of Scripture.
>
> "Thou mayest read," he replied, "in the 3rd of Daniel that the three children were cast into the fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar's command, with their coats, their hose and their hats on." This plain instance stopped him; so that not having anything else to say to the point he cried again, "Take them away, jailer."

True anarchists, the Quakers would make a Star Chamber matter of a triviality, and yet, in effect, they were both conservative and opportunist; they accepted Cromwell, they accepted Charles II; they would accept anybody. What they did not accept was the rule of bureaucracy in matters of belief. It is interesting that neither Cromwell nor Charles persecuted Fox; Cromwell admired "a people he could not buy," Charles was amused and indifferent. The persecution came from the underlings.

In two countries, Scotland and Ireland, the Leicestershire peasant was not at home. In Scotland he came up against pedants and Presbyterianism was an obdurate enemy of the Quakers. In Ireland, for the first time in the *Journal*, there is a suggestion of bewilderment, distaste and even fear: "The earth smelt, methought, of the corruption of the nation." The smell, as in Lichfield, was of blood. In Lichfield the blood shed by Diocletian; in Dublin the blood of the Popish massacres. Not, be it noted, of the Cromwellian massacres. In Cork he felt the peeping eyes at the windows; spies were everywhere; his description was sent on a 100 miles ahead in the disturbing manner of a jungle message. "A grim black fellow"—an evil spirit—appeared to be chained to Fox's foot. He rode in fear of "the Tories"—gangs of disbanded soldiers—and was relieved to escape them. The voyage back to Liverpool was made in a tempest and in the end of the adventure so prosaically recorded one sees one last sardonic thrust from the corrupt island. Fox was slanderously accused of having taken to drink on the night of his return to Liverpool.

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No, Ireland, for all the "tender" people there and the great meetings, was a nightmare. The Leicestershire shepherd was not made for such dark imaginations as bewitched that country. He is English. One sees him, the big man from a dull, flat country, a peasant shrewd and yet in a massive way naive, sober yet obstinate, gentle yet immovably blunt, a man who has made his mind up, who with Cromwell remained himself, who has the inordinate pride and yet the inordinate humility of the saints. V. S. PRITCHETT

SURVIVAL AND SEA POWER

Sea Power. By T 124. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.

This is one of the few important books published since the beginning of the war. The author is described as "a well-known writer on naval and military affairs"; internal evidence suggests that his main preoccupation has been with the sea.

The thesis of the book may be summarised as follows:

(1) Mahan's famous thesis about sea power remains as true to-day as when it was first published fifty years ago. Air development has not changed the balance of advantage; given air equality, command of the sea renders an island like Britain practically invulnerable, is sufficient to maintain the Empire and provides enormous military advantages. The author quotes historical examples to show that a small body of troops made mobile by naval transport may be worth many times their numbers on the Continent. The Navy produces the essential element of surprise in offence as well as of security in defence.

(2) The notion that the Channel ports are in some peculiar way vital to our security is an illusion. The French Channel ports were in the hands of Britain's traditional enemy for nearly two hundred years without imperilling our security. Even when Antwerp, "the pistol pointed at the heart of England," was in Napoleon's hands, it proved "to be loaded with blank." In a word, as long as British ships retain command of the sea the presence of enemy ships or enemy contingents at the Channel ports has not been dangerous. That has proved as true in the summer of 1940 as it was in the days of Napoleon, even though aerial warfare has blunted the point of the Admiral's quip: "I do not say that the French cannot come. I only say they cannot come by sea."

(3) Holding that Britain lives by the sovereignty of the sea, and will be ruined, as Napoleon prophesied, if she tries to be a Continental power, T 124 believes that the collapse of France has "providentially" offered us an opportunity of escaping from a totally false strategical conception. He explains that the military commitment of France under the Liberal Government before the last war was made by Grey, Haldane and a few others, who, like Sir Henry Wilson, were fascinated by the French conception of land warfare. Not only were most of the Cabinet ignorant, as we know, of what was being done, but so, according to this author, was a Committee of Imperial Defence. Admiral Fisher was of course furiously opposed to the whole notion of an expeditionary force.

(4) Examples are quoted to show that wherever we have attempted large-scale interference on the Continent we have made fools of ourselves, whilst when we have relied on our sea power we have, in fact, been able to exercise a decisive influence on Continental affairs. This, unfortunately, takes the author into a politically ignorant excursus on the folly of the whole League of Nations and Collective Security concept. He does not understand that those who most strongly supported this view did so first because they believed it worth while to give up national sovereignty in order to end national wars and, later, because they believed that another German war (involving Britain) was inevitable unless we could counter the Axis threat in time by an anti-Fascist coalition. They were not thinking on imperial lines. But we need only concern ourselves now with the strategic argument of this book.

(5) T 124 argues that the land operations of the last war were ludicrously expensive and unnecessarily exhausting to England. The Navy, which was largely responsible for winning the war, lost no more men in the four years than were commonly lost in a single battle in Flanders. If the money we spent on the Army had been devoted to the Navy and Air Force we might have had a fleet which would have given us complete security, and we should never have got as near to disaster as we did during the submarine campaign of 1917. We might have had 625 battleships and 7,500 destroyers instead of an army of 2,000,000; the Admiralty would then have no excuse for refusing the ships for convoy work. T124 notices that those who most violently urged conscription and another great land army in 1939 were commonly Army men, including, of course, the retired generals whose names one expects to find in the correspondence columns of the *Times* and *Telegraph*. He misses here one very important point. Many of us who felt passionately with him against the conscription of another large continental army were compelled to accept this necessity in 1939 because France was, after all, an ally of Britain, and French morale seemed to demand the presence of a British Army. T 124 will reply that the French breakdown had nothing to do with the presence or absence of a British Army. That may well be. But in May of 1939 the French demand was overwhelming.

(6) T 124 argues that "we should seek the least bloody way of achieving our object. And I say 'achieving our object' deliberately, in preference to 'victory' or 'winning the war.' These two latter terms are perhaps the most dangerous ones in the English language at the present time, in as much as they deceive many people into thinking that we cannot win until we have 'smashed the Germans' and that to smash the Germans we must have soldiers marching into Germany." T 124 quotes a prophetic passage from Mr. Garvin who urged in the strongest terms in 1919 that the Treaty of Versailles could only drive the Germans to revenge, and after many tribulations compel them to greater national unity and military power. Mr. Lloyd George's knock-out blow was the surest way of exhausting Britain and of producing Hitler. "Victory" gave us only twenty-one years of uneasy peace. Most wars have come to an end not by the destruction of the enemy but by a settlement more or less honestly accepted by both sides. In this case T 124 believes we shall ruin ourselves and do no good to anyone if we attempt to defeat Germany on land and then to impose our own settlement on Europe. Europe must find its own salvation. If, he argues, Germany becomes satiated and rules decently over the peoples she has conquered, then it would be wrong as well as foolish on our part to attempt to prevent this imposed unity. Great areas of the world have usually been unified by force. If, on the other hand—and this he agrees is the more likely alternative—German rule is purely selfish and intolerable, there will be discontent and revolt on the Continent, and when that occurs we shall have the power to aid it provided we retain our sea supremacy and our relative detachment. T 124 gives examples of successful amphibian adventures in which the command of the sea has enabled us to land troops and to maintain a resistance which in the long run has proved fatal to the conqueror. The Peninsular War is the classic example. Moscow and Spain were the undoing of Napoleon; they may yet prove fatal to Hitler.

(7) Our role in Europe should be a defensive one. The collapse of France has given people the false notion that there was something wrong with the French strategy of defence behind the Maginot Line. On the contrary, as the author points out, France's mistake lay not in having a Maginot Line but in not having one along her Northern frontier. We still have our Maginot Line on the sea if we concentrate on aerial and naval supremacy.

There are many things with which I disagree in this book, but on the main point that Britain should not hope to invade Europe with a huge land army I am wholly in agreement. France with five million troops was defeated by a mechanised force of perhaps a quarter of a million. Tanks, aeroplanes, propaganda and the Fifth Column conquered France. No British army could wrest Europe from Hitler's control; but mechanised British forces might turn discontent into revolt and revolt into revolution which, properly supported, would mean the end of Hitler. But T124 does not want a European revolution. He only dislikes Hitler because he threatens the British Empire. He does not realise that Hitler's greatest strength is his capacity to exploit the divisions within the plutocracies. Is it possible to conceive a Europe dominated by Hitler, and the present Britain on its outskirts? Given the fullest guarantees from the United States it is perhaps just conceivable. Would it be possible for such a Britain to maintain any semblance of free institutions? It is difficult to believe that it would as long as the Nazis remained in power, German pressure and propaganda would be continuous, free comment about Hitler's regime and his treatment of subject peoples would involve a continual menace of renewed war. Peace with Hitler means friendship with Hitler and friendship with Hitler means subjugation to Hitler. How would it be possible to avoid moving towards a Fascist Britain which would try, like Mussolini's Italy, to maintain its independence and which even then would inevitably become a satellite Power? This is not simply a war of nations. Our enemy is the state of mind called Fascism; our strategy and propaganda should be directed solely by a determination to abolish it. KINGSLEY MARTIN

THE GEORGICS

The Georgics of Virgil. Translated by C. DAY LEWIS. *Cape.* 5s.

Far in advance of the roar of their own engines, flights of silvery raiders appear between the autumn clouds. Lower down, two planes seem to be engaged in combat, diving with a low ominous distressful whine, turning and banking and flattening out, then shooting off across the rim of the landscape in the direction of London. The faint rat-tat of machine gun fire is mixed with the sound of water tumbling over the weir into the lower millpond: a moor hen clucks hoarsely among the withered bullrushes: and yellow leaves, which spin and tremble along the poplar hedge, keep up a low insistent trickling murmur. There might be worse places to read a new translation of the *Georgics*: for Virgil, too, wrote of the delights of peace, haunted as he wrote by ideas of war, and took refuge from the contemplation of human misery in a description of man's part in the natural universe:

. . . tot bella per orbem,
Tam multae scelerum facies . . .

Mr. Day Lewis's English rendering was itself undertaken in times of crisis; and the dedicatory stanzas with which the volume opens pay a tribute to the steadying and consoling powers of poetry:

Now, when war's long midwinter seems to freeze us

And numb our living sources once for all,
That veteran of Virgil's I recall
Who made a kitchen-garden by the Galaesus
On derelict land, and got the first of spring
From airs and buds, the first fruits in the fall,
And lived at peace there, happy as a king.
Naming him for good luck, I see man's native
Stock is perennial, and our creative
Winged seed can strike a root in anything.

The consolation he has derived, he conveys to his readers. In the present dearth of new English books worth reading or reviewing, Mr. Day Lewis's *Georgics* are doubly welcome: not only are they extremely interesting as a feat of scholarship, but they make a real contribution to modern poetic literature. Since Mr. Arthur Waley published his delicate English versions of ancient Chinese poetry, I can call to mind no other translation so fresh, so independent and, on the whole, so uncommonly successful. The problems Mr. Day Lewis has confronted are many and complex. There are translations good and bad. But the perfect translation does not exist; and, although to an Englishman Mr. Waley may seem to have opened the door on new continents of beauty, I have heard a Japanese complain that, while he admired Mr. Waley's command of English free verse, to *his* ear at any rate the effect of the original more closely resembled that aimed at by nineteenth-century poets of the *Parnassien* school—tight, compact, scintillating, hard as crystal: whereas Mr. Waley had merely extracted the prismatic colours. Similarly, some critics may complain that Mr. Day Lewis's Virgil is not their own. In the personality of a great writer there are several different faces; and it is natural that through the medium of a foreign language only one of those faces should at a time appear. The translator, however accomplished, is bound to simplify; and the poet whom Mr. Day has resurrected is not the mysterious compelling figure of the Middle Ages, not the correct, eloquent, somewhat colourless rhetorician who hovers in the chalk-dust haze of English schoolrooms, but a serious, passionate, moody, reflective man with touches of rustic awkwardness beneath his Augustan toga:

Virgil—a tall man, dark and countrified
In looks, they say: retiring: no rhetorician:
Of humble birth: a Celt, whose first ambition
Was to be a philosopher: Dante's guide.
But chiefly dear for his gift to understand
Earth's intricate, ordered heart, and for a vision
That saw beyond an imperial day the hand
Of man no longer armed against his fellow
But all for vine and cattle, fruit and fallow,
Subduing with love's positive force the land.

Of the various elements in his poetic composition, Mr. Day Lewis has seized one and Dryden another. Dryden's rendering is extraordinarily brilliant, if equally partial. And to compare a fragment of the seventeenth with a passage of the twentieth-century version is to be half persuaded of the superiority of the couplet form, at least as regards stylistic dash and rhetorical elegance. Here, for example, is what Mr. Day Lewis makes of the passage from which I have already quoted at the conclusion of Book One:

Long now has the court of heaven grudged you to us, Caesar,
Complaining because you care only for mortal triumphs.
For Right and Wrong are confused here, there's so much war in the world,
Evil has so many faces, the plough so little
Honour, the labourers are taken, the fields untended,
And the curving sickle is beaten into the sword that yields not.
There the East is in arms, here Germany marches:
Neighbour cities, breaking their treaties, attack each other:
The wicked War-god runs amok through all the world.
So, when racing chariots have rushed from the starting-gate,
They gather speed on the course, and the driver tugs at the curb rein
—His horses run away, car out of control, quite helpless.

And here is Dryden's much looser, bolder and more exuberant transcription:

. . . Long the gods, we know,
Have grudg'd thee, Caesar, to the world below:
Where fraud and rapine, right and wrong confound;
Where impious arms from ev'ry part resound,
And monstrous crimes in ev'ry shape are crown'd.
The peaceful peasant to the wars is prest;
The fields lie fallow in inglorious rest:
The plain no pasture to the flock affords,
The crooked scythes are straighten'd into swords:
And here Euphrates her soft offspring arms,
And here the Rhine rebellows with alarms;
The neigh'bring cities range on sev'ral sides,
Perfidious Mars long plighted leagues divides,
And o'er the wasted world in triumph rides.
So four fierce coursers starting to the race,
Scour thro' the plain, and lengthen ev'ry pace:
Nor reins, nor curbs, nor threat'ning cries they fear,
But force along the trembling charioteer.

But the weakness of the couplet is that it becomes monotonous: while its chief virtues—speed and charm and surface polish—are scarcely appropriate to the grave measured beauty of Virgilian hexameters. Very wisely, Mr. Day Lewis has steered clear both of English hexameters and of the heroic couplet. After many experiments, he tells us, he "decided to use a rhythm based on the hexameter, containing six beats in each line, but allowing much variation of pace and interspersed with occasional short lines of three stresses." The result is a medium of uncommon elasticity which, although here and there the effect may be a trifle limp, is easy and natural, yet deliberate and dignified when the occasion demands. We shall continue to read Dryden for his sudden felicitous outbursts (which contain more of Dryden then they do of Virgil—magnificent improvisations on Virgilian themes) and in the future we shall turn to Mr. Day Lewis' rendering because he follows the original text with such unusual delicacy and fidelity, squeezing its poetic significance from every line and image. Dryden's genius stands between his reader and the poet he translates. One of Mr. Day Lewis' greatest merits is that he takes us back to Virgil—a delightful experience and particularly soothing at the present period. Footnotes—perhaps wisely—he has avoided; but there were two or three passages, I found, in which I should have been glad of their assistance. Why, for example, does Virgil warn his Roman husbandman on no account to burn crab-shells near the bee-hives? It seems a superfluous piece of advice to an inland farmer.

PETER QUENNELL

BITTER EXPERIENCE

The Development of Religious Toleration in England, Vol. IV. By W. H. JORDAN. *Allen and Unwin.* 21s.

This, the last volume of a momentous work, analyses in detail the lay thought about religion in England during the twenty years that preceded the Restoration. It is a subject of enthralling interest, especially to-day, when we have come to take tolerance so much for granted that at times we actually appear to despise it, and in Dr. Jordan it has found a worthy exponent. He examines in turn the Latitudinarians, the Cambridge Platonists, the Rationalists, Sceptics, and Erastians, and the rank and file. He summarises their works so well, and with such apt quotations, that he almost persuades the reader to go back to the originals. And he shows how their conclusions were founded, not so much on moral and humane convictions, though these too were there, as on political and practical expediency, on respect for reason, on disillusionment and indifference, and above all on bitter experience. And since to-day we, too, must find our path,

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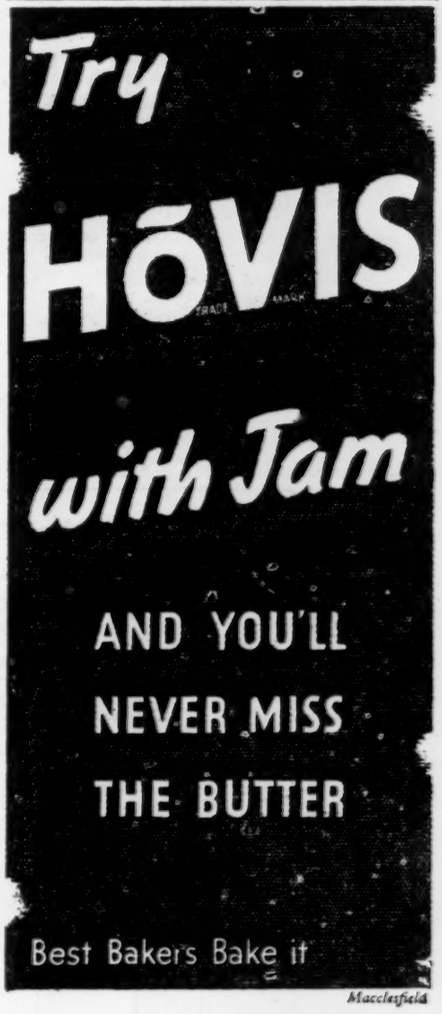

not by the light of any revelation, Marxian or other, but by that same stern mistress, this book has a message for us that is both salutary and hopeful.

The Moderates founded their arguments primarily on political expediency. Once the general acceptance of an exclusive church had disappeared, as it had throughout Europe, oppression and intolerance could only tear the State asunder and put an end to all security. Men must be judged by their good-citizenship, not their creed. The clergy alone, animated by ambition and tradition, would not accept this dire necessity. Therefore the State must impose a legal toleration, "to save religion from its own excesses." The Rationalists, drawn largely from the merchant classes, took the practical line. Commerce and good neighbourliness could flourish only in a State at peace, and peace depended on toleration. "If a pagan nation may not be invaded in their territories because they will not be of our religion," writes Robinson, the London tradesman, ". . . why should a particular man have his own lambe, his pittance taken from him for refusing only to be of a religion?" *Cujus regio ejus religio* was already insufficient. The world would never find peace and prosperity till liberty of worship was conditioned only by good citizenship. The Cambridge Platonists, almost the most interesting of all the groups, founded their support of that thesis on academical argument and respect for reason. "Man requires nothing more for the attainment of religious truth than time for consideration, freedom for contemplation, and liberty for conviction." Compulsion can do nothing but harm, for "there is no heathenish magic in religion, it does not work as a charm." And so on; throughout all the various groups of thought the same calm level-headed view prevails. Only by tolerance can we ever achieve peace, security, and true Christianity.

Some minds of a rare quality emerge from Dr. Jordan's pages, and not always the most celebrated. We all know Milton, but who to-day reads Whichcote, the Cambridge preacher, who wrote almost nothing and yet deserves to rank with the most humane minds that Europe has produced.

> "I will not break the certain laws of charity, for a doubtful doctrine or uncertain truth." "Every man should subject himself to the sternest personal discipline. But towards all other men he should be completely tolerant, seeking to move them by no other means than reason and persuesion." "Truth is truth, whoever hath spoken itt, and whosoever itt hath bin abused."

In brief, Dr. Jordan shows us England learning the very lesson that Europe must learn again to-day, and he ends with a warning:

> Man was left free by the triumph of religious toleration, but he stood terribly alone upon the slender integrity of his own puny reason and the wavering uncertainty of his own ethical judgment. It remained for time to determine whether he would gain strength, nobility and high courage from the freedom with which he stood endowed or whether he would be entrapped and enthralled by new fanacticism and colder barbarisms, uninspired even by morality of purpose.

FLORA GRIERSON

NEW NOVELS

Ask Me To-morrow. By JAMES GOULD COZZENS. *Longmans.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Jane Fairfax. By NAOMI ROYDE SMITH. *Macmillan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Voyage. By CHARLES MORGAN. *Macmillan.* 9*s.*

So Help Me God. By A. W. HOLMES. *Hutchinson.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Jorkens Has a Large Whiskey. By LORD DUNSANY. *Putnam.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The lot of the private tutor is traditionally unenviable. In Elizabethan times it was expected of him—

> First, that he lie upon the truckle-bed,
> While his young master lieth o'er his head.
> Secondly, that he do, on no default,
> Ever presume to sit above the salt.

Jane Fairfax, in *Emma*, found little contentment in the expectation of a governess's career; and Francis, the modern hero of *Ask Me To-morrow*, is restless and unhappy in his position of tutor to the delicate son of a wealthy American family. The situation is inevitably an ambiguous one, a No-Man's-Land between the drawing-room and the kitchen. A man of sensitive intelligence, finding himself hemmed in between genial condescensions and tactful reprimands, is liable to take shelter in a pervasive irony of the gentler sort. This is what Francis does. In him Mr. Cozzens has a character admirably suited to the dry and subtle comedy of which he is a considerable master.

Ask Me To-morrow opens with Francis travelling to meet Mrs. Cunningham, the mother of his pupil, Walter. Mrs. Cunningham—and this is where Mr. Cozzens is most acute—is not a vulgar and easy target, but a woman of uncommon sensibility: a fact which slyly undermines the little of decision that there is in Francis's character. A rather tenuous love-affair in which he is engaged stresses his inadequacy as a tutor without giving him the impulse to escape from his discontented situation, and the book ends with a moment of utter futility which leaves Francis still revolving like a minor planet round the powerful sun of the Cunningham household.

I imagine some readers will find this a slight and unsympathetic story. It certainly lacks ballast. The superbly comic first chapter almost falls away as a short story, complete in itself. The girl whom Francis loves is left vague and featureless. These are faults, but they are more than compensated by the vivacity and polish of Mr. Cozzens's writing. The complex inactivity, the expert self-torture, the shrewd, malicious insight of Francis—a nice blend of Hamlet and Prufrock—make a devastating portrait of the "promising young novelist" (Francis, of course, has published a clever book, and is engaged on another. His ability to withstand the endless humiliation of life, as he lives it, doubtless proceeds from a private conviction of "genius"). It is a most awkward, wriggling character to hold firmly, but Mr. Cozzens never fumbles. He strips every pretension from Francis, without jeering at his infirmity of will or under-rating his power of retaliation. I count his a brilliant portrait, charged with that rare wit which is both unsparing and compassionate.

One is apt to think that, in spite of his prestige, Henry James has almost no influence on modern American fiction. Mr. Cozzens is a welcome contradiction of this. He is, like James, a literary writer, and a very accomplished one too. A good half of the pleasure of *Ask Me To-morrow* is in the subtlety of its fine shades of irony. "Conscious or would-be ironists see irony everywhere," Mr. Cozzens observes; adding characteristically, "They have their reward." They do indeed. Mr. Cozzens has inherited from James an irony, not so much directed at this or that character, as diffused about the entire human situation. He handles it worthily, and to those who like their humour dry I recommend *Ask Me To-morrow* as something quite exceptional.

In *Jane Fairfax* Miss Royde Smith takes a turn at the most attractive of literary parlour-games—filling in the detail that a great writer left out. Readers of *Emma* will recall that the construction of the book demands secrecy about Jane Fairfax's engagement to Frank Churchill. Miss Smith desires to vindicate Jane Fairfax by showing that if there had been no secrecy there would have been no wedding, and Jane would have spent her days instead as a governess. I had thought Jane Austen did justice to this extenuation, and in any case it is Frank Churchill's taste for intrigue rather than Jane Fairfax's embarrassed duplicity that most attracts censure. However, this is no matter for dispute. Miss Smith has made a pleasant story out of Jane Fairfax's early life, and having decided to write a novel about a novel she has gone the whole hog and brought in all the fictional characters she could lay her hands on. The Bertrams, the Thorpes, Fanny Burney's Evelina and Lord Orville, and other characters from novels of the period, stroll across the stage and make *Jane Fairfax* a sort of All-Star Matinée. I admire all the more Miss Smith's restraint in leaving Miss Bates and Mrs. Elton alone; indeed her story virtually ends where *Emma* begins. Whether *Jane Fairfax* will mean much to those who have not read *Emma*, I do not know. Austen fans with a taste for apocrypha will probably find it highly entertaining.

The Voyage is another of those tournaments of metaphysical love with which Mr. Morgan seems to be obsessed. This time the setting is in France where Barbet, vine-grower, bird-watcher and simple saint, pursues an entanglement of the soul with Thérèse, a self-willed, ambitious and scarlet woman, who becomes a famous *diseuse*. Students of Mr. Morgan's work will not need to be told that a tireless fusillade of sententious apophthegms accompanies the lovers' steady progress towards the bed, after one night on which they part in order to escape the horrors of domesticity. The facade of *The Voyage* is imposing, but I find it impossible to discover three walls—or even one wall—behind it. Verisimilitude in fiction can be a vice as much as a virtue, but a minimum of credibility is imperative; and I do not believe in Mr. Morgan's characters, nor in his claims for them.

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GODFREY PHILLIPS & SONS TOBACCO MANUFACTURERS
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They are no more than the wishful phantoms of a frigid and priggish imagination. Barbet is drawn with all the complacency of a Victorian "improving" tale. He looks the lion in the eye, and it quails; nor are we allowed for one moment to doubt that it would quail. His love for Thérèse is the stock drama of the romantic tradition, exactly as classified and docketed in de Rougement's *Passion and Society*. Thérèse herself is that Babylonian whore with a heart of gold who seems to reside exclusively in the studies of literary gentlemen.

In his manner Mr. Morgan is heir to what is least admirable in Richardson. His dialogues are set-pieces of lofty moralising, aimed to distil virtue from the sensibilities of high romance. Except that Mr. Morgan's philosophy is heretical, Barbet might be described as a modern Grandison. He is certainly offered as a model of conduct—or at least of conversation about conduct. I make this reservation because when Mr. Morgan forsakes the word for the act his touch is less sure. He relates with approval how Barbet, left in charge of a village gaol, releases the prisoners and is himself imprisoned for his unorthodox but kindly action; fortunately he in turn escapes through the negligence, the unphilosophical negligence, of a gaoler; but here the story turns aside without pursuing the consequences to the gaoler, who I imagine must have been punished and perhaps imprisoned as the price of Barbet's escape—unless, like Barbet, he was able to secure a pardon through the intervention of Thérèse's accommodating lover. This nice moral problem, however, does not disturb Mr. Morgan who proceeds, in his bleached and laundered prose, to remind us that we are all ships that pass in the night; and that any familiarity between us (other than a permissible first bite) would surely breed a contempt that no decently fastidious person could endure.

So Help Me God, a first novel, is a sensitive little sketch of life in a City office. The characters are freshly drawn, and the story is made attractive by a quiet unforced sincerity. Anyone who has worked in the City will be quick to appreciate the touches of exact detail with which Mr. Holmes builds up his scene. This is a good *genre* painting, executed with simplicity and an affectionate knowledge of the subject.

Lord Dunsany is already famous as a connoisseur of the fantastic. In *Jorkens Has a Large Whiskey* he competes with Stephen Leacock in ingenious absurdities. The peak is probably reached when Mr. Jorkens sells the Gulf Stream, in a most convincing manner, to a Devon landlady; but in his lesser triumphs the idea of each story has a no less original and rich inventiveness. Neatest of all, in my opinion, is the proof that the distance from Westminster Bridge to Blackfriars Bridge is farther than from Blackfriars Bridge to Westminster Bridge. I should have betted against that, and lost; now, armed with Mr. Jorkens's lunatic logic, I am looking for a victim.

DESMOND HAWKINS

HAPPY OROKOLO

Drama of Orokolo. By F. B. WILLIAMS. With many illustrations. *Oxford.* 30*s.*

This is one of those books which one puts off reviewing, out of sheer respect for its excellence. One reads all round the subject, and when, as in the present case, many previous anthropological studies have been published by the same author, one persuades oneself that his last book can only be appreciated if one has read all the others. It was thus that I discovered how little justification there is for Mr. Williams's "melancholy thought that no reader is ever half so interested in a book as its author was"; for his study on the Vailala Madness, an epidemic of iconoclastic fanaticism which in 1919 and the following years swept through certain Papuan villages, fortunately missing Orokolo, seems so to have stirred the cupidity of readers that it alone, of all the Port Moresby Anthropology Reports, was missing from the British Museum shelves. It will be strange if this magnificent record of the huge ritual cycle of Orokolo, the culmination of Mr. Williams's fascinating studies of Papuan life, made during his long residence there as Government anthropologist, does not rouse an even greater lust of possession, for during 450 pages he builds slowly up, with almost architectural art, the whole structure of the social and ceremonial life of the Western Elema, till at last the great *Hevehe* masks, which from time to time in museums have aroused our uninformed wonder, take their place for us in a great pattern of life.

We are given first a complete picture of the scene and the people among whom the drama-cycle has evolved; for in so integral a society every element plays a functional part, even the ornaments and pigs, of which Mr. Williams aphoristically says: "Ornaments are more than uncles, pigs than maternal nephews." We are shown the age-groups and the eight age-grades; the "one-moon" friends, whose mothers became pregnant during the same moon; the "hereditary" friends, dating from an impulsive gift made by one man to another at a dance; the old men, of whom there are some graphic pen-pictures and photographs, ceremonial functionaries, men of substance, specialists, doctors, sorcerers. The author has noted at least fourteen distinct stages in the gardening cycle, and recorded the spells uttered for each by the *laihiau laera*, the man who cuts the first patch in the virgin forest selected for clearing. He is the garden magician, "who has inherited the relevant magic and who agrees to place it at the service of his own *eravo* (men's house) and of those who may co-operate in the making of the garden." Everything falls into its place as we proceed, from the first steps in building the *eravo* to house the masks, through the long series of initiations and preliminary rituals, the cleaving of the coconut, cutting of the first canes, making of the masks, gradual enlargement of the *eravo* to receive the immense completed masks; through the many dances and dramatic crises of *Hevehe* to the final mourning over the departing masks, the ritual slaying of the leader and the burning, after which the *eravo*, "which in its true architectural proportions is unnecessary except for *Hevehe*," is abandoned and falls into gradual decay.

Mr. Williams concludes, after a close study of the names of the masks, and their designs, of which many beautiful illustrations are given, that the *Hevehe* cycles are those periodic sojourns during which they feast, dance and rejoice in the company of human beings. It is impossible to give even an idea of the richness and variety of material in the eighteen chapters which form the core of this book, and which are devoted to description and discussion of every aspect of the Orokolo drama, with a freshness, humanity and vividness of description which are rare in ethnographical books. Here is a moving picture of a "dead" mask. All the men are outside in the sunshine painting the masks:

> The *eravo* was strangely empty. Innumerable long rattan canes dangled from the roof, each with its hook at the end for suspending the *hevehe*. It was as if the great gloomy space were filled with giant cobwebs; and everywhere, to increase the untidiness, there lay to-morrow's feathers, in bundles, rolls, or tied to long strips of cane. One lonely *hevehe* remained amid this scene of desolation, while all its fellows were being bedizened for the forthcoming gaieties. It was that of a man named Hapeha who had died four years previously. Some other might have taken it over . . . but Hapeha had no brothers; and to make matters worse the *harehare-akore* for whom it was made had also died, so that the mask, doubly bereaved, remained without a claimant. It was said to be "dead." Thus the 123rd *hevehe* never saw the light of day until, at the end of the cycle, it was taken out with its fellows to be burned.

There is another side to Mr. Williams's book. It is more than a record of the organisation and ceremonies of one Papuan tribe, in itself a comprehensive task, seeing that one cycle may extend over twenty years; it is, as Professor Seligman says in his preface, a lesson to governments and missions alike, "for we may agree with the author that it was largely due to the intensity of foreign influence in Vailala and the malaise consequent thereon that the Gulf Madness arose." The admirably reasoned Critique, which forms the third part of this book, is an attempt to estimate the cultural value of *Hevehe*, for the benefit of the two alien influences mentioned above. Mr. Williams is at times almost over-conscious of his responsibility as a government anthropologist, which he rather whimsically contrasts with the "pure-minded" variety. But he cannot hide that he has fallen in love with *Hevehe*, and the intensity of his impression glows in the sober but eloquent paragraphs in which he summarises its values, recreational, aesthetic and dramatic.

Happy Orokolo! invaded only by demons of sea and bush, whose sirens are bull-roarers and whose black-out is the ritual extinguishing of lights when Ma-Hevehe rises with pomp out of the sea.

BERYL DE ZOETE

The Battle of France. By ANDRÈ MAUROIS. With drawings by EDWARD ARDIZZONE. *Lane.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This little book might have been written as a melancholy illustration to prove what Mr. Werth has recently argued about the effects of censorship. M. Maurois, as everyone knows, had a "watching

Executors

When choosing an Executor or Trustee there is much to be said for the individual, but able though he may be, the corporate body has many advantages, the principal of which is that it cannot die before carrying out the terms of the Will.

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brief" with the B.E.F. during the Maginot period of the war. The first half of his book consists of slight, Brambly sketches of British officers and units; they breathe optimism with the best of manners. Looking back now on what he wrote then, M. Maurois confesses:

> I wonder why and how we did not realise at once that our numbers were too small, our equipment scanty, our defence inadequate. As a matter of fact, we did realise it from time to time, but there was a conspiracy of optimism. Strict censorship and misplaced loyalty combined to discourage criticism.

"Strict censorship and misplaced loyalty": it is to be hoped that that conjunction, which has an ominously English smack, will not be allowed to undermine us here. Of the two, "misplaced loyalty" is perhaps the less easily eradicated—as one can see from the example of M. Maurois himself. For the second half of his book, which is supposed to provide the realistic reverse, "written for myself," turns out to be almost as mild-mannered, as accommodating, as softly-padded as the first. The chief attraction of his book is the illustrations: the pick of Ardizzone's drawings of the B.E.F. from the first War Pictures Exhibition, reproduced in monochrome. They retain much of the wit and fun, the lounging elegance and occasional striking pathos of the originals. Ardizzone tickles and warms with his humanity, where M. Maurois leaves only an impression of polite evasion.

The New Burma. By W. J. GRANT. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

This is half travel book, half an account of Burmese industry, politics and religion written by an English journalist who for some years edited the *Rangoon Times*. It is an unpretentious piece of writing on a subject obviously near its author's heart, and it gives a clear picture of Burmese life and institutions. The only disadvantage of its author's having lived there so long is that the clubs and bungalows and golf courses have for him a glow they haven't for us. But his descriptions of native life are sympathetic; that passivity of the Burmese character which is neither laziness nor religious trance is well analysed. If one doesn't expect too much, *The New Burma* can be recommended for its sidelights on Burmese life since the coming of the "new order" in 1937.

Week-end Competitions

No. 560

Set by Fred Oyster.

We offer the usual prizes of two guineas and half-a-guinea for a Blackout Blues. Words only, limit 20 lines.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, c/o Cornwall Press, 1-6 Paris Garden, Stamford Street, S.E.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, November 11th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

3. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 558

Set by Roderick Random

Publishers are in the habit of using quotations from the reviewers for advertising their books. Competitors are invited to invent a set of *three* quotations suitable for advertising any *one* of the forthcoming books listed in this issue. Success in imitating the style of individual reviewers or journals will be highly marked.

Report by Roderick Random

Individual reviewers are not so easy to imitate, it seems. There's always Mr. Agate, of course, or Sir Hugh Walpole's unflagging enthusiasm. But, generally speaking, the customary ingenuity of the competitors seems to have been unfired by the idea. A pity, because the other two methods of attacking the problem are even less fruitful. Collocation, for instance, is one of them. You take a book which is likely to rouse very different feelings and oppose one brief comment to another. J. C. B. Date treated Stalin's *Leninism* in that way.

> "One of . . . the very . . . great . . . books . . . of . . . our time."—*Daily Express.*
>
> "Good reading."—*Daily Worker.*
>
> "I have read it."—Bernard Shaw.

The first of these adroitly parodies the less scrupulous of publishers' advertisements. But the second is feeble. And no one else produced a better of this kind. The third method is to catch the collective style of a newspaper, and this was the most popular approach—though never entirely successful. To find the prize winner I was thrown back on the individual parodies. Charles Furbank invented two good ones for W. H. Auden's *The Double Man.*

> ". . . This great-hearted book will undoubtedly place Mr. Auden beside Mr. Priestley as one of the outstanding popular philosophers of our day."—Sir Hugh Walpole in the *Daily Sketch.*
>
> "His philosophy is impermissible, his verse no longer valid and his continued adolescence merely an embarrassment."—Queenie Leavis in *Scrutiny.*

H. Bedwell began a Virginia Woolf review of Beachcomber admirably but fell away.

> ". . . The tea grows cold, the toast hardens, its butter slowly congealing. . . . ."

Stanley J. Sharpless gave a good first and a smart third, but I recognised the tone of his second without agreeing that it would appear where he places it. He should have given a name found in the more gushing columns of a Sunday paper:

> BY THE WAY. *By Beachcomber.*
>
> This tireless Fifth Columnist is perpetually subversive of humbug and a potent menace to gravity; the most readable of newspaper drolls, whose jocosities puncture pomposities and whose matutinal mummeries are as quippish as quirkish.—Ivor Brown.

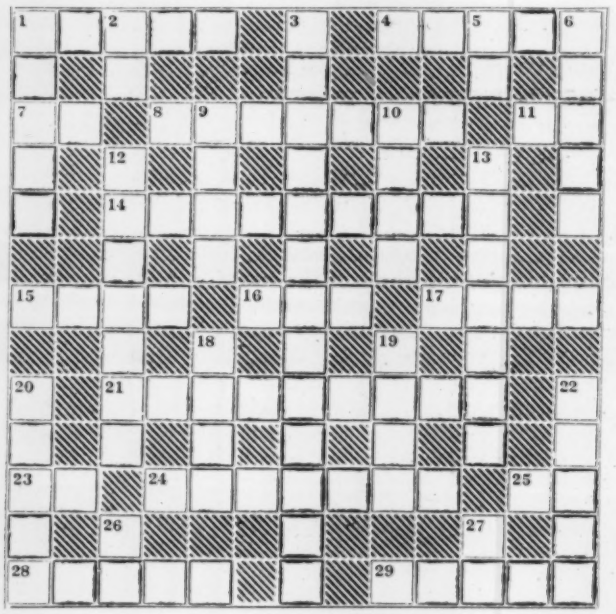
Beachcomber here dons most excellent motley, and with his own special brand of ebullient *obiter dicta*, collected from contributions to a contemporary news sheet, featly performs the not inconsiderable task of providing entertainment that groundlings will chuckle over, and the rest of us commend for shrewdness and wit.—*Times Literary Supplement.*

Your ha-ha book of the month.—*Daily Express.*

I recommend for first prize "1580463" with three good straight parodies. And for second prize Richard Pomfret.

> THE VOYAGE. *By Charles Morgan.*
>
> If tenderness, as Joubert suggested, be "passion in repose," then this, with the single exception of the Tent Scene in St. Joan, is the most passionate thing I have come across since I first opened *Sense and Sensibility* (by mistake) and forgot it was Derby Day! . . . Always, we suspect, a poet, even on first-nights a philosopher, Mr. Morgan here contracts for the first time a lawful marriage of his cohabiting faculties.—Mr. Agate in the *Daily Express.*
>
> At variance or rather divergence from every "movement" in contemporary letters, Mr. Morgan has successfully rescued his talents from that anarchy of form and incoherence of matter which seem to us older critics the prevailing characteristics of the younger pioneers. . . . A word about his style. A really mature stylist is never surprised at himself, just as he is never obviously pleased with himself. His only surprise is that anyone else should be surprised at what he has to say, or at the way he has to say it. In *The Voyage*, then, Mr. Morgan writes with less surprise, and that is to say with more authority, than in anything he has given us previously. And this . . . is not the least significant of the classicist symptoms.—Mr. Desmond MacCarthy in the *Sunday Times.*
>
> Like Bradshaw and Old Moore it transcends every known norm, and disarms criticism. *De gustibus*, etc. . . . A book that everyone will pretend to have read for months to come. So you'd better.—John Mair in the *New Statesman and Nation.*
>
> "1580463."
>
> THE VOYAGE. *By Charles Morgan.*
>
> In its obscure clarity, dynamically static—even *ecstatic!!*—James Agate.
>
> Mr. Morgan could not have composed this work. Rather was it quarried from the remote ore of an austere apprehension.—*Spectator.*
>
> No Voyage by Captain Morgan
> Broached the riches of this organ.—*Punch.*
>
> RICHARD POMFRET.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 5 *Set by* V. S.



The last week's winner is:

P. Nichols, 48 Church Way, Whetstone, N.20

ACROSS

1. Cunningly clued as "Sarum." (5).
4. 1d. a shout! What a state to be in. (5).
7. See 23.
8. The French and her Cockney club together — they're in the pink. (7).
11. rev. and 5. Rest disagreed with Mrs. Spratt. (4).
14. Motor race? (9).
15. Mother's joined the Church of England — and does she find it spicy! (4).
16. It's a florin, stupid. (3).
17. and 2 and 25. TER-. (8).
21. Just like Pa to tease us for delicacy. (9).
23 and 7. The destitute have the river as an alternative. (4).
24. Public housings? (7).
25. See 17.
28. Billy's wife is a beast but she looks after the children. (5).
29. No good in hurry — it gives you quite a turn. (5).

DOWN

1. The porter is out on the street. (5).
2. See 17.
3. Domestic crockery? (6 and 7).
5. See 11 rev.
6. Looked like this when Bashan went to war? (5).
9. Brief English anger for part of the Empire. (4).
10. Out of it. (4).
12. Bill, Bill, I 'as the blooming things! (7).
13. Just the opposite, as the poet put it. (7).
18. O mightier than the sword. (4).
19. Biblical king makes a joke. (4).
20. Epitaph on a town. (5).
22. The child is a girl.
26. rev. and 27. No one curtailed the lunch hour. (4).
27. See 26 rev.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

C	O	R	D	O	N	■	B	A	R	S	A	C
■	■	E	■	G	■	■	■	L	■	T	■	■
A	■	S	L	A	P	■	B	L	E	U	■	V
C	■	U	■	■	S	■	■	■	P	■	I	■
H	O	M	E	S	W	E	E	T	H	O	M	E
E	■	E	■	O	■	A	■	S	■	R	■	W
■	■	■	B	L	A	S	T	E	D	■	■	■
I	■	B	■	I	■	O	■	L	■	H	■	A
S	O	U	N	D	I	N	G	B	O	A	R	D
I	■	R	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	R	■	E
S	■	E	K	A	L	■	H	A	C	K	■	N
■	■	A	■	S	■	■	■	I	■	E	■	■
S	O	U	G	H	S	■	O	R	A	N	G	E

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," "NEW STATESMAN AND NATION," c/o Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, London, S.E.1.

Company Meeting

TRINIDAD PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT

BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE

PROPOSED ISSUE OF NEW SHARES

MR. KENNETH MOORE ON THE TAXATION POSITION

THE Annual General Meeting of the Trinidad Petroleum Development Company, Limited, was held on October 30th at Sunningdale, Berks.

Mr. Kenneth A. E. Moore, F.C.A., the chairman, presided.

The Chairman said: In normal times shareholders look on the one hand to the audited accounts for information as to the financial results and position, and on the other to the directors' report and to my statement at the annual general meeting for details of production, field operations, and development. With information before them on both the financial and operational aspects of the company's affairs they are in a position to form for themselves a view as to the company's position and prospects.

ALL WELL ON OPERATIONAL SIDE

On this occasion, however, there are two imponderables—on the financial side the uncertainties of taxation, and on the operational side the absence of information. As to the operational side, I must on this occasion, and for reasons which need no explanation, ask shareholders to accept my assurance that all is well. As to taxation, I shall be explaining the position fully later in my remarks.

Turning now to the accounts, you will observe that the profit before provision for taxation amounted to £360,677—roughly double that for the preceding year. This somewhat startling increase is not, as might perhaps be thought, due to a violent increase in prices but rather to a number of factors, of which prices are only one, and to the fact that we are now reaping the benefit of the increased labours of the last few years, made possible by the additional share capital raised early in 1937.

LIABILITY FOR EXCESS PROFITS TAX

This brings me to the subject of taxation—and particularly our liability for Excess Profits Tax. You will have observed that we have transferred to taxation reserve out of the year's profits no less a sum than £200,000.

So long as Excess Profits Tax remains at 100 per cent. its incidence is of such paramount importance to shareholders that I feel they are entitled to the fullest explanation of the company's position that I can give them at the present time.

COMPANY'S POSITION

That position may be summed up as follows:—

1. Under the Finance (No. 2) Act, 1939, the company's standard profit must be selected from its trading results in the calendar years 1935–1936–1937. In spite of the fact that it was then in the process of development and that annual production was very much less in those years than it has been since Excess Profits Tax was imposed, there is no provision in the Act under which the company can put forward a claim for relief on those grounds.

2. In arriving at its liability for Excess Profits Tax the company is entitled to add to its standard profit 8 per cent. of any increase in the average capital employed in the business beyond that employed in the selected standard period. In connexion with this allowance for increased capital the Inland Revenue have put forward a technical contention, based on the fact that the company was a subsidiary company until additional share capital was issued early in 1937, the effect of which is substantially to negative any allowance in respect of that additional capital. It is that very additional share capital which has enabled the company to increase its production and profits. The point at issue affects the company's liability to a very material extent, and I need hardly say that we are taking the matter to appeal.

3. Under the Finance (No. 2) Act, 1940, section 13, the company, being engaged in the production of oil, has the right and is taking steps to join with others similarly engaged in a collective application for an increase in the rate allowed on increased capital. The basic rate is 8 per cent., as already mentioned, and the Board of Referees have power to increase it to such extent as they think fit, but not in any case beyond 12 per cent. in all.

Any concession obtained under section 13 applies to all companies of the class making a successful collective application, whether their individual pre-war standards are good, bad, or indifferent.

In other words the possible relief afforded by this section does not meet individual cases. It only empowers the Board of Referees to recognise the fact that in the getting of minerals or oil the benefit of capital expenditure may be exhausted at a greater rate than in the case of other classes of commercial activity. Thus all companies within the class—rich or poor—obtain equal benefits.

There is in fact no provision in the existing legislation under which we, as an individual company, can get relief on the facts of our case—which as you know, for want of a better expression, is a "hard case."

Now that Excess Profits Tax is at 100 per cent. it seems more than ever unfortunate that our legislators have failed so far to provide for cases such as ours.

DIVIDEND OF 15 PER CENT.

After making this transfer there remains out of the year's profits a balance of £160,677. An interim dividend of 5 per cent., absorbing £50,000, was paid in June last and the directors recommend the payment of a final dividend of 10 per cent., absorbing £100,000 and making the total dividend for the year up to 15 per cent. as for the previous year. If the directors' recommendations are approved, the amount to be carried forward will be £74,305, an increase of £10,677 over the balance brought forward from the previous year.

Turning now to the balance-sheet, you will observe that the two principal items on the assets side which are affected by capital expenditure—namely, oil wells and development account and plant, buildings, tanks, pipe lines, stores, materials, etc.—once again show a substantial increase over the corresponding figures for the preceding year. In fact, taking these two items together, the increase amounts to £152,749, in spite of the fact that £112,253 has been written off during the year for depreciation. Part of this increase is accounted for by the fact that as a matter of policy certain reserve stocks of stores and materials have been built up in Trinidad, but in the main the increase is due to permanent capital expenditure.

EXPENDITURE ON DEVELOPMENT

The position is therefore that during the past and recent years large sums have been spent on capital account in connexion with the development of the company's properties, and, if I may say so, spent to very good purpose. But with taxation at its present level it is no longer possible to finance such expenditure out of profits, and it is largely for this reason that your directors have come to the conclusion that the capital resources of the company must now be increased.

We propose to seek the authority of the shareholders for an increase of £200,000 in the authorised share capital of the company in the form of 200,000 Six per Cent. Redeemable Cumulative Preference shares of £1 each. The consent of the Treasury has been obtained and an extraordinary general meeting is to be held at an early date to deal with the matter, and it is our intention to offer the new shares to our shareholders at par in proportion to their existing share holdings.

I want to express our thanks to Commander Lavington, our manager in Trinidad, for the satisfactory way in which the company's affairs have been carried on during the difficult conditions of the past year. I am sure that as shareholders you will wish to be associated with your directors.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

Company Meeting

HARRISONS AND CROSFIELD, LTD.

PRESIDING at the thirty-second Annual Meeting of Harrisons and Crosfield, Limited on Tuesday, the Chairman, Mr. H. Eric Miller, said that during the year the Company had invested £200,000 in National War Bonds and new War Loan, in addition to which various companies for which they act as Secretaries had subscribed over £1,000,000. They had also paid income tax well in advance.

While he was sure that all the stockholders in the Company were proud to be making a large contribution to the war effort, he was bound to emphasise the increased taxation both at home and abroad had necessitated a particularly heavy charge against the profits for the past year. As a result of the retrospective effect of increases in rate of income tax, that year's profits, besides bearing current taxation, had had to bear an extra liability both at home and abroad, which was attributable to past profits and which could not be foreseen when the previous year's accounts were prepared.

They had thought it only right to record in their report to the stockholders their appreciation of the loyal and efficient manner in which the members of the staff in different parts of the world were coping with the complications and difficulties of a widespread business under war conditions.

Tea producers (except for a short time in the Netherlands Indies) had been able to market their crops at moderately profitable prices. The natural desire of consuming countries to increase their stocks at the beginning of the war, the complete control by the Government of the United Kingdom tea market and the progressive closing of Continental markets had involved some fluctuation in the exportable percentage under the International Tea Regulation Scheme, which was working well, 92½% being the rate for current period.

The total output of plantation rubber during 1940 will create a new record but is well within productive capacity. Absorption has been affected by war conditions, but outstanding development has been the decision of U.S.A. Government to acquire large reserve stocks of rubber to be held against special emergencies, 85,000 tons under Rubber-Cotton Barter agreement, then 150,000 tons during 1940 and further 180,000 tons during 1941, not to be released without reasonable safeguards protecting plantation rubber industry. Arrangements made are statesmanlike and accord with desire of two Governments to co-operate harmoniously in defence of freedom. The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted.

Young Bill had a practice unique
He would shave only once in a wique
Till JIF came his way
Now he shaves every day
And his chiques are quite slique so to spique
Jif
Men find Jif Shaving Cream makes the daily shave really pleasant and refreshing. It is quick, comfortable, soothing, convenient and works up a copious lather. It is made by Pears.
SHAVING CREAM
A. & F. Pears Ltd., Isleworth, Middlesex

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

GILT-EDGED REACTION—CANADIAN REQUISITIONING—WALL STREET OUTLOOK—TRINIDAD PETROLEUM.

THE surface of the stock markets has been at most ruffled by the Italian attack on Greece. The firm front has been on the whole maintained. The railway market has shown its gratitude for the latest rise in rates (although it failed to maintain its improvement), shipping shares responded to the increase in freights, and brewery shares have expressed relief that the property insurance scheme safeguards the vast real estate of their tied houses. Only the gilt-edged has eased to some extent to show its grief at Italian perfidy. Brokers are asking themselves how they can increase the volume of business to help pay their expenses. The latest requisitioning order is the answer.

* * *

The Canadian Government, as is well known, has been acting as a very helpful honest broker for the British Government in its purchases of war supplies from the United States. It has, no doubt, temporarily deposited securities in British ownership as collateral for the day-to-day credits which the American Government has extended to it for purchases ultimately to be paid for by the British Government. So, from time to time, we shall see the British Government making financial arrangements which enable it to put the Canadian Government in cash funds. This week the Treasury requisitioned its first batch of Canadian dollar securities (guessed at about $25 millions' worth), but it seems to have surprised the market by including in its requisitioning order the sterling issue of Grand Trunk 4 per cent. Consolidated Debenture Stock (guaranteed by the Canadian Government) of which £24½ millions are outstanding. Surely it is not to be wondered at that the Canadian Government should want to reduce its old sterling indebtedness out of the sterling balances which it is rapidly accumulating in London. It is certainly better business for it to repay sterling debt costing 4 per cent. than to invest in Treasury bills at 1 per cent. It has already repaid two Sterling Loans—the £28 millions 3½ per cent. 1930–50 and the £19 millions 4 per cent. 1940–60 on which it had an optional call. The only surprise is that it did not also include this week the £12½ millions Grand Trunk 4 per cent. Guaranteed Stock, which is callable on six months' notice. The reinvestment of this Canadian money should help the gilt-edged market.

* * *

Whether the Presidential election will clarify or confuse American thought about the war it is not for me to discuss, but it has certainly confused Wall Street. Majority opinion seems to be bullish. England will not be beaten, Uncle Sam will keep out of the fighting and American industries will boom. I like the Wall Street broker's circular, which in an attempt to avoid an excess of bullishness solemnly declared: "An invasion of England is not entirely out of the question. The last successful invasion in 1066 occurred about this time of the year." But every broker seems to believe that the American economy is rapidly approaching a state of full employment and boom. The maddening thing from our point of view is that America expects butter and guns together, but it is obvious at this date that improved automobiles, more houses, more luxuries will mean fewer guns and fewer aeroplanes. If American business men are seriously trying to help us, they should realise that they must not design new motor cars which require new tools or expand their production for civilian users. The tools and the steel are urgently required for war purposes. Major Angas, I am glad to see, is inclined to run counter to the popular view. He thinks that Wall Street is living in a fool's paradise, that England's stout resistance has not removed the danger of a defeat if America stays out, that trade may soon get dislocated and that industrial profits will suffer in new taxation more than they will gain from Government armament expenditures. He even prophesises that industrial net earnings (after taxes) in America will be less in 1941 than in 1939.

* * *

Shareholders of Trinidad Petroleum Development are receiving the right to subscribe to one new 6 per cent. cumulative redeemable preference share for every five ordinary shares held. After allowing £200,000 for taxation, which should be more than adequate, although the actual liability for Excess Profits Tax cannot yet be estimated, the profits for the year ending July 31st last amounted to £160,000, which enabled the company to pay a 15 per cent. dividend on its ordinary shares. The new issue of £200,000 6 per cent. preference shares will, therefore, be strongly covered as to dividends, and I advise the lucky shareholders to take up their rights. In due course these preference shares should go to a premium of about 4s. The ordinary shares, after dipping to 46s., have recovered again to 50s., at which the dividend yield is only 6 per cent. Now, the maintenance of this dividend depends upon a reasonable settlement of the Excess Profits Tax. At the moment the Treasury is most unreasonable, for it will recognise the wasting nature of the company's assets only to the extent of an extra allowance of 6 per cent. or so on the capital percentage. This miserly attitude will hold up the development of our Empire oil resources.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

FABIAN LECTURE
Saturday, November 9th, 2.15 p.m.
G. D. H. COLE on
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Tickets, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., AT DOOR or from FABIAN SOCIETY, 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1 (WHI. 3077).
Nov. 2. ELLEN WILKINSON on "SOCIAL JUSTICE."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, November 3rd, at 11 a.m. PROFESSOR G. W. KEETON, M.A., LL.D., "THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA AND AFTER." Admission free.

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning Service only. November 3rd, at 11.30. GRACE COLEMAN: "WHAT THE ORDINARY MAN WANTS DONE AFTER THE WAR."

WHICH WAY TO PEACE? Public Meeting. Conway Hall (large hall), Holborn, on Sunday, Nov. 10th, at 3.0 p.m. Speakers: Wilfred Wellock, Alexander Miller. Chairman: David Spreckley. Organised by the Forward Movement of the P.P.U. Will readers please bring this to the notice of all who might be interested.

ANNIVERSARY RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. Dean of Canterbury and Mr. R. Palme Dutt speak at Holborn Hall, Saturday, November 9th, 2.30. Tickets 1s. and 6d. from RUSSIA TO-DAY SOCIETY, 8 Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

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